

THE STORY  
OF A LIFETIME



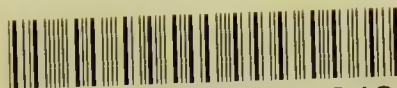
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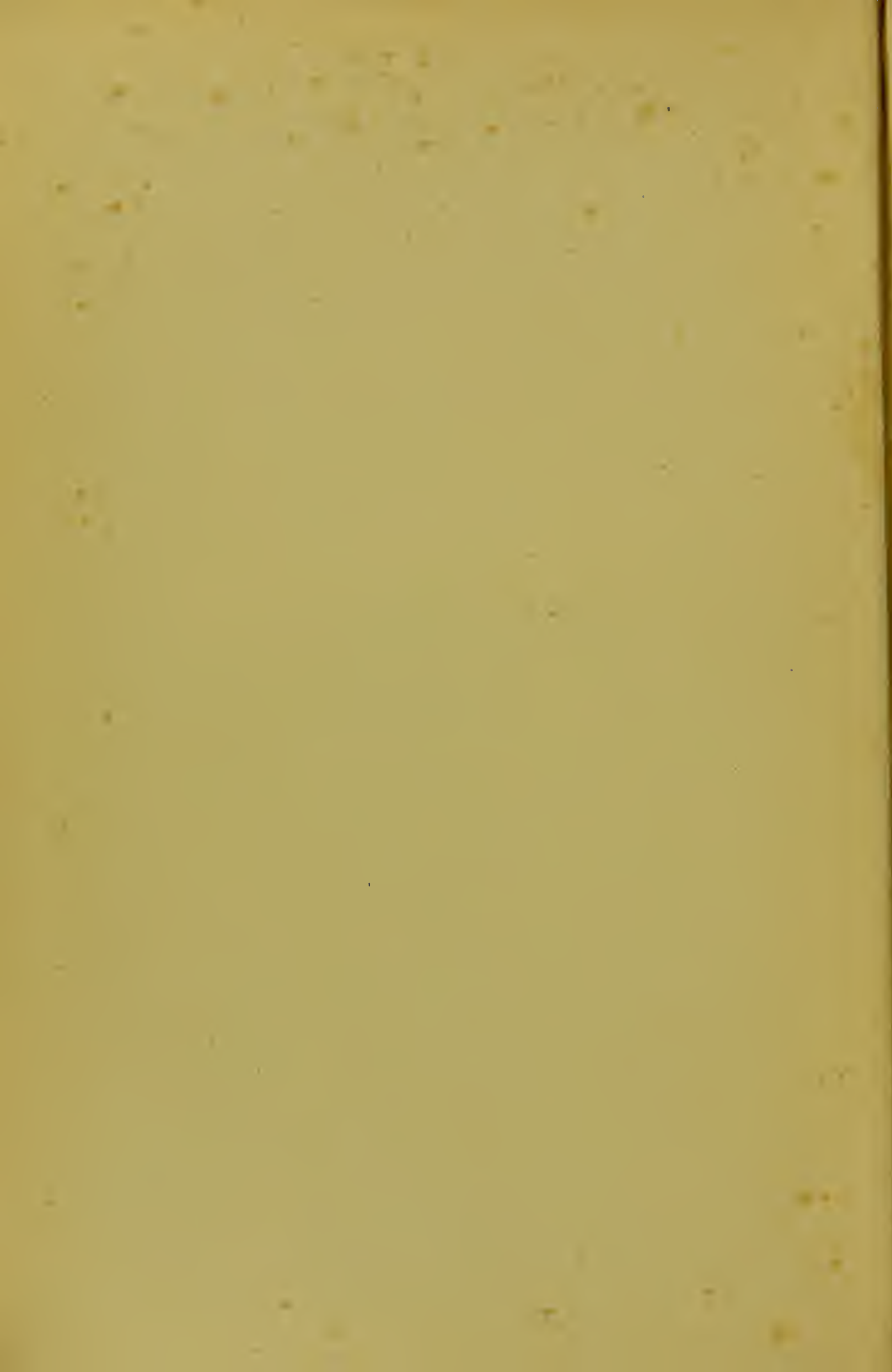


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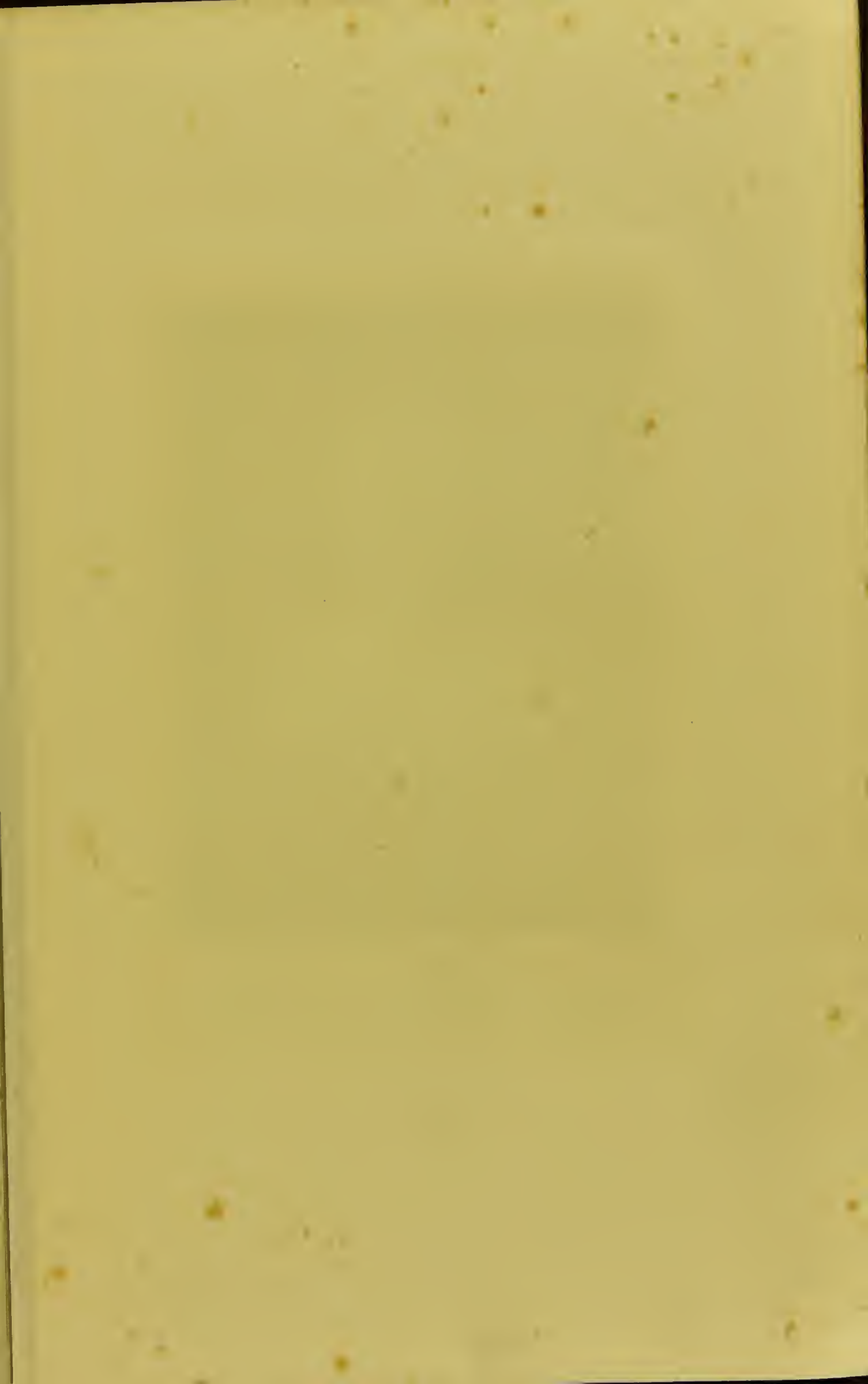
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**THE STORY OF A LIFETIME**









Eliza Priestley  
1886.







THE  
Story of a Lifetime

BY  
LADY <sup>[Ellis]</sup> PRIESTLEY  
z

With Illustrations

*Written at the express desire of her children*

LONDON  
GILBERT & RIVINGTON  
*Limited*  
ST. JOHN'S HOUSE, CLERKENWELL, E.C.  
1904



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THIS  
STORY OF A LIFETIME

I DEDICATE TO

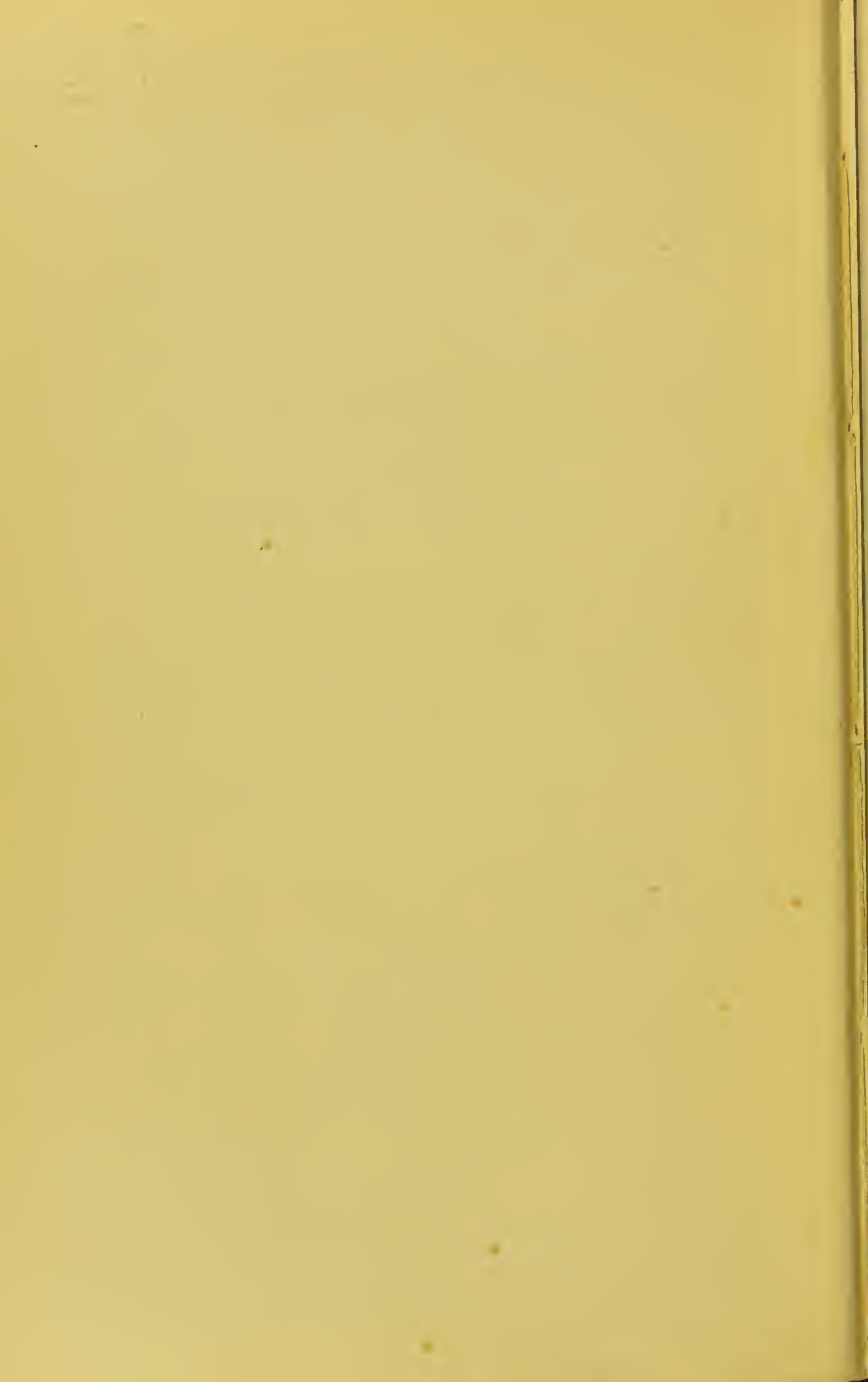
SARAH LADY NICHOLSON

WHOSE SYMPATHY AND AFFECTION HAVE EVER BEEN  
CLOSELY INTERWOVEN WITH THE FAMILY EVENTS,  
AND WHO PERSONALLY HAS FILLED THE PLACE IN MY HEART  
LEFT VACANT BY THE DEATH OF MY TWIN SISTER.

ELIZA PRIESTLEY.

31, *Hyde Park Square,*  
*London.*





## PREFACE

THIS book is written purely for my children, Robert Chambers Priestley, M.A., M.B.; Mrs. Walter Dugdale; Joseph C. Priestley, K.C.; Mrs. Lionel Pontifex; their families, and our friends.

ELIZA PRIESTLEY.

*Westbrook Hall.*





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# THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

## PART THE FIRST

### CHAPTER I

#### IN A LIBRARY

Here wait the dumb, whose voices rule the earth ;

Here rest the dead, whose life is quick and free.

Hush, living lips, before their solemn mirth ;

Life, learn of them the true vitality.

*Katharine Aldrich, in "Munsey's Magazine."*

I LOVE the serene solitude of my library. It is a refuge in time of trouble, a retreat after a full and active life, a sanctuary. This library is no cold and gloomy barrack with serrated rows of unread and unreadable books, but, built according to my fancy, it forms a shrine dedicated to the many authors I have known. The volumes in it are to me like no other books, for they have come to me by inheritance, some by presentation, and have formed the surroundings of my various homes since childhood.

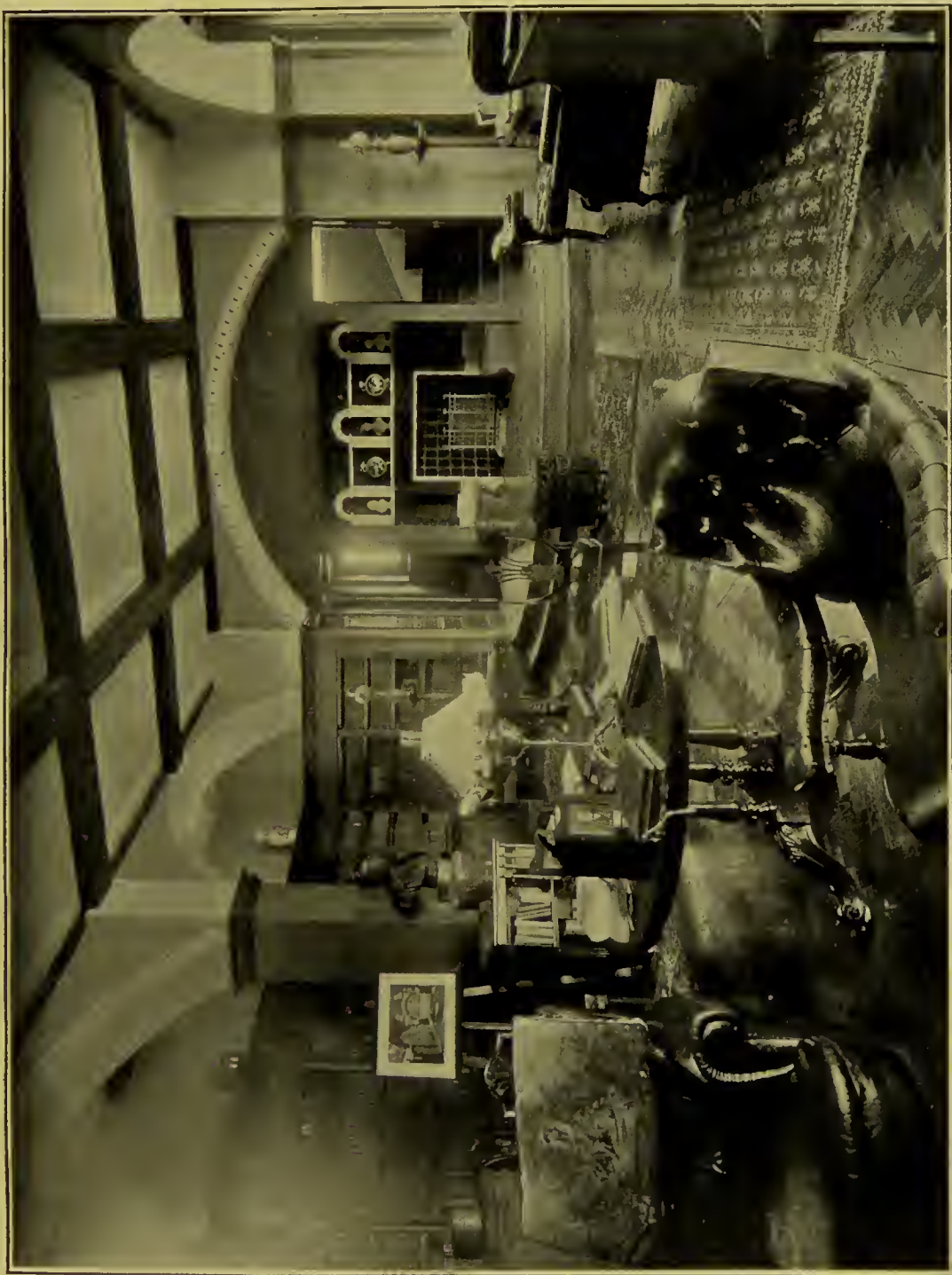
It is only in the country that a library can fulfil its natural rôle and become the true friend. Here in the midst of peace there is no neglect, no forgetfulness shadowed by reproach, for it is here and here alone that the authors long since dead seem to live

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

again, and encompass me with the friendships of a lifetime. On all sides vivid scenes spring out from the past, stirring every emotion from grave to gay, from laughter to tears, in this treasure-house of all I have loved and mourned. On various tables and shelves stand busts, medallions, engravings, and photographs of authors whose books adorn the surrounding walls.

At one end of the long room two circular steps lead up to the ingle nook, an ideal corner for a "session of sweet silent thought—" and calling up sweet visions of long ago. There in the winter evenings, gazing into the crackling logs, I can see my father, Robert Chambers, a lonely boy, his mind possessed with literary instinct, traversing the solitudes in search of data, without influence or help of any kind. Yet that boy's first book, "The Traditions of Edinburgh,"<sup>1</sup> took an extraordinary hold of the public, and at once excited the interest of the literary world of Scotland. Dreaming on, I can see the quaint figure of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe—a mine of Traditions in himself—wending its way along Princes Street, bent on seeking out the author and claiming friendship with a kindred spirit. This friendship led to a continuation of "The Traditions," and subsequently to a more intimate friendship, with Sir Walter Scott than that already existing. Sir Walter now flits across the scene, and I can hear him asking Constable the publisher a few particulars about the author, and exclaiming in astonishment on being told he was a youth of twenty, "Where did the boy get all his information?"

<sup>1</sup> First published in 1822.



THE LIBRARY, WESTBROOK HALL





## SIR WALTER SCOTT

A few days later Sir Walter Scott and his son-in-law Lockhart pursued their way to the boy's lodging—how well I can visualize them—and took the boy so much by surprise that he could not utter a word. To give him time to recover Sir Walter took up a copy of the Traditions lying on the table, and reading out one of the quaint bits, ascribed it to Kirkpatrick Sharpe. This was a mistake, but my father was too shy to explain that it was only a “quaint bit” of his own. Next day, having occasion to write to Lockhart, he explained the mistake, when he and Sir Walter had a second laugh over it.

Not long after this interview Sir Walter wrote my father a kind letter and sent him a packet of MS. consisting of sixteen folio pages which contained all the reminiscences he could at the time collect of old persons and old things connected with the old town of Edinburgh.<sup>1</sup> He had intended writing a similar work himself, but now relinquished the idea. The friendship thus begun ripened as years went on, and only ended at Sir Walter's death and funeral.

A great bond of sympathy between the great novelist and the aspiring boy was that they both hailed from Tweed-side and alike knew the people from whom some of the characters in the novels were drawn. One curious connecting link was that between William Laidlaw, the amanuensis of Sir Walter, and my father's mother, who were at the same school as boy and girl. After the school days they did not come together again for forty years, when they met at a ball, and recognizing one another,

<sup>1</sup> These MSS. are still in possession of the family.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

exclaimed respectively, "Jeanie Gibson!" "Willie Laidlaw!" Meanwhile Willie's brother had wished to marry my father's sister Janet, but her affections did not incline that way. The two Laidlaws were sons of Laidlaw of Blackhouse, in whose service James Hogg was employed as shepherd. David Gellatly, whose real name was Jock Grey, was another of the characters. He used to come to my grandmother's house and sing comic songs, among others being one composed by himself beginning "Daft Jock Grey." He also gave imitations of the ministers all round the country, and when in want of fresh inspiration would duck his head under the table cloth or anybody's apron who happened to be near, and would keep it there till the inspiration came. Megg Dodds, of St. Ronan's Well, was a Miss Ritchie, she and the Shortreeds all being known to my father's family in the early days of their life in Peeblesshire.

In these, the Augustan days of Edinburgh, there seemed to be a wonderful gathering of the literary clans. Robby Burns was still a living memory, he and Sir Walter having met once at a friend's house,<sup>1</sup> when the latter was fifteen years of age.

The Laidlaws' herd boy had left his sheep and burst upon the world as the Ettrick Shepherd of poetic fame. He used to speak of my father as "an unaccountable sort of person," alluding to his youth in connexion with the Traditions, which he always believed were not founded on well-known facts, but were "just taken out of his own heed." Many were the jovial evenings held by the Shepherd in his one room in the old town, a room so small

<sup>1</sup> Sheen Hill House.



AUNT JANET IN EARLY DAYS



## CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

that some of the guests—my father included—had to sit on the bed !

Some years after Sir Walter's death I remember on more than one occasion going with my father to Mr. Steel's studio to see how the statue (now in Princes Street) was getting on. I was presented on one of these visits with a chipping of the marble to keep as a memorial, but, alas for the reverence of childhood, nothing but the recollection remains. It is something, however, to have the family reminiscences of Sir Walter enrolled in the life written of him by my father, and also to possess the Waverley novels in five different editions dating from 1815 to 1880. And there in a shelf near my father's many works rests a poor insignificant looking volume entitled "Catalogues," a touching relic of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, my father's first literary friend.

The first in this volume of most interesting old catalogues is that of "The late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., of Hoddam." It begins with a preface written, I should think, by my father, in which it is stated that "to Mr. Sharpe Sir Walter Scott owed many of the most graphic incidents which give such inimitable life to the productions of his pen." Hence through this poor volume I make the discovery some seventy years later that Kirkpatrick Sharpe had rendered to Sir Walter a service similar to that which he extended to my father when a boy. Thus truly "in books we find the dead living."<sup>1</sup>

The catalogue is in itself not the least curious of the curios figured out for sale, for in it is a remarkable print illustrative of two twelfth century chess-

<sup>1</sup> Richard de Bury.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

men, the oldest known to exist with the exception of the set of Charlemagne. They were found in the Isle of Skye in 1831, and consisted of eleven pieces, the remainder of the set being in the British Museum. The collection of curios was quite unique, and it is interesting to trace through the pencil markings that my father must have been present at the sale, and purchased some of the quaint old books which are now in my possession.

Another interesting personage of that period was Professor Wilson, "Christopher North" of the pen, author of "The Isle of Palms," "City of the Plague," &c. His life-long friendship with my father also took root in the Traditions, which he hall-marked by an admirable notice in his "Noctes Ambrosianæ." There above my head, adorning a niche in my ingle nook, stands a small bust of the famous Christopher, reminding me of the many jigs and Highland flings I have danced with him in girlhood. He was very fond of stepping across from his own house in Gloucester Place to my father's in Doune Terrace to amuse himself with the girls and dance in his stocking soles to my mother's spirited music.

Yet another character who flits across the scene of my youth is Sir Adam Fergusson, an extremely handsome and most gracious old gentleman. He was a neighbour and intimate friend of Sir Walter, and one of the few in his confidence regarding the authorship of the Waverley novels. After the secret was known he described to my father how he sat beside Sir Walter when he was writing "The Antiquary." He wrote with great ease and rapidity, and as each sheet was finished it was passed on to

## THOMAS CARLYLE

Sir Adam to look over. He survived Sir Walter twenty-two years. He was very fond of music, and took great delight in hearing my sister Amelia sing Burns' lyrics set to my mother's accompaniments. About five weeks before his death he was listening to my mother playing sacred music on the harmonium, when my sister Mary executed an admirable sketch of him, which was greatly valued by his friends. He was born in 1770, died in 1854, and was laid in the family vault in the old Greyfriars churchyard on the site of the Covenanters' Prison.

Before taking leave of the Traditions and surroundings I must introduce a letter written by Thomas Carlyle to my father, showing how much he was regarded as an authority about things and places in the historical old town of Edinburgh.

Chelsea, April, 1845.

MY DEAR SIR,

Thanks for your extract from the *Journal*, which has come in right season. I have, since I saw you, got still more decisive evidence, if more had been needed, as to Cromwell's Edinburgh habitat in 1648. A contemporary pamphlet expressly describing "the great civilities of Edinburgh to Lt.-General Cromwell," in a "letter to a friend," which is printed October 23rd, 1648, has these words: "The Earl of *Murrie's House* in the *Cannigate* was provided for him." We have the old pamphlet here in the collection called "The King's Pamphlets" in the British Museum (No. 392, Art. 26, of that collection); and Rushworth (VII. 1295, Edition 1701) gives an abstract of it,



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

wherein is that phrase I have quoted. Cromwell staid only three days, from Wednesday, October 4th, to Saturday, when old Leven gave him a dinner in the Castle, and he went out to Dalhousie on his way to Carlisle. There are several other curious particulars ; of the Provost visiting him and "old Sir William Dick making a speech for the rest " on that occasion, &c.

As to the Cromwell quarters in 1650, again, I am still in the dark : and if you have any conclusive evidence that it was in the same house, I should be very glad to get a share of it. The Argyle wedding while Montrose was passing by is very curious if indisputable : but that of *spitting* on the brave prisoner throws a shade of doubt over the fact which perhaps it does not deserve. I am much obliged for your description of the house as it now is, concerning which there can be no doubt.

I have already got that American Cromwell letter ; but did not, till your copy came, know, what also was essential for me, what book or magazine it had been extracted from.

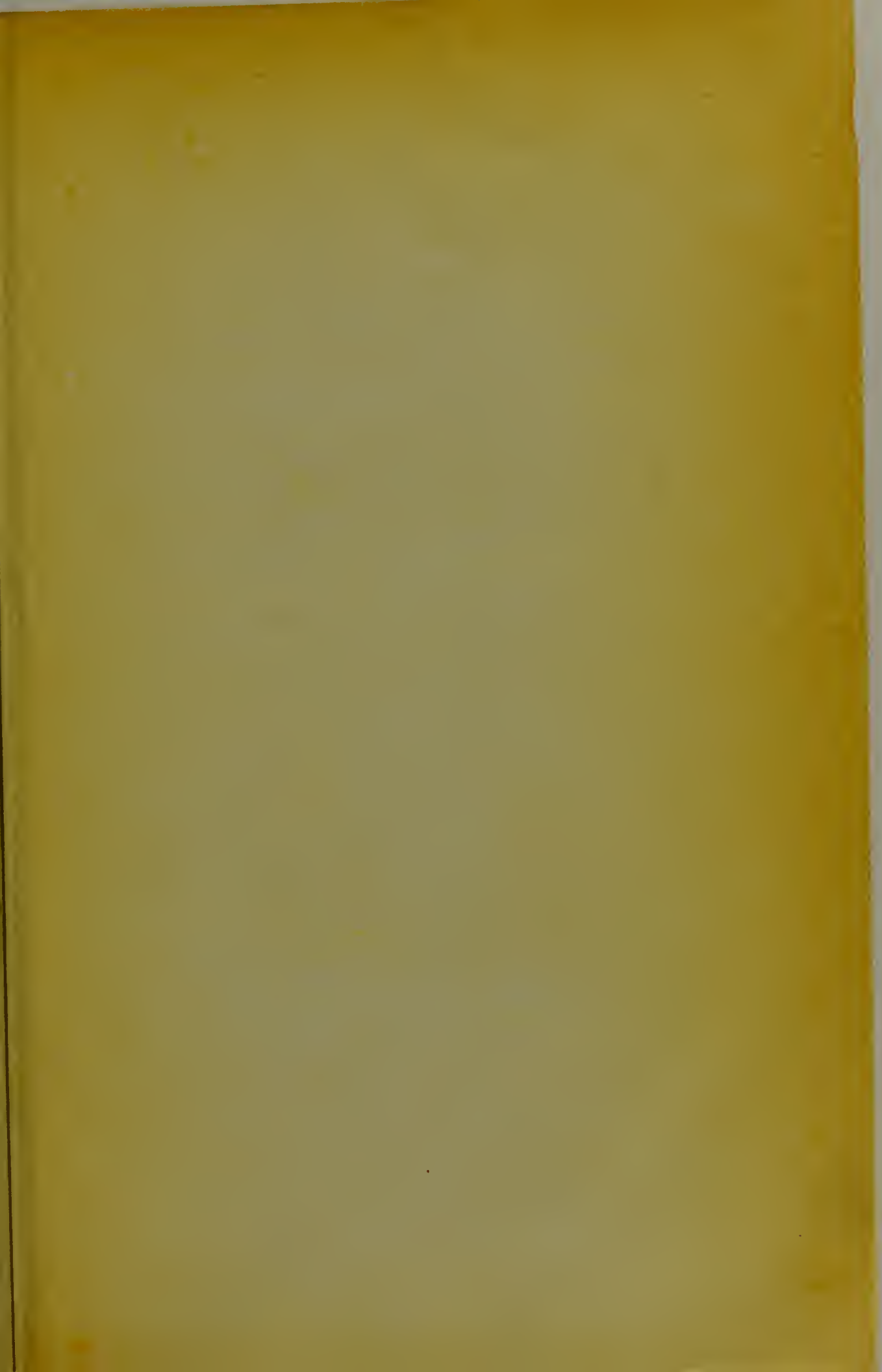
If you can give me any reference about the Edinburgh House of Cromwell in 1640, when he must have lived off and on, for almost a year, when he was very sick and almost dead at one time, and when several curious letters now in my library must have been written, I shall be very grateful for it.

With many thanks for what I have got already,

Yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

This, then, was the interesting circle into which my mother was led as a bride of twenty by a bridegroom







*Mama*



## MY MOTHER

seven years older. She was born with music in her, and enchanted the literary world by her beauty and grace as she played the harp, or sang Scottish ballads to her own exquisite accompaniments on the piano. Through the advent of my mother, art was now united to literature and science, thus forming a delightful trinity, and doing not a little to draw all the birds of these various feathers together around the home of my childhood.

## CHAPTER II

My first wakening to a consciousness of surroundings was at the age of two years, when we lived at Coates House, on the outskirts of Edinburgh. Three sisters and a brother had preceded me, and one sister had accompanied me into the world. I can perfectly remember the little coach in which my twin and I were driven about in these ante-perambulator days. We were so exactly alike that the one had to wear a coral necklace from the hour of birth to distinguish her from the other, and to the amusement and delight of my father we never knew the difference between ourselves. To each other we were one and the same. When he lifted one up to the mirror and asked, "Who is that?" the reply would be not the expected "me," but "Jenny," or "Lizzie"; that *other* one of the pair. James Hedderwick the poet, friend of my babyhood and advanced years, wrote the following verses on the incident :—

### THE TWIN SISTERS.

Stand both before me; for when one is gone  
I scarce can tell which is the absent one:  
To stray asunder ye should aye be loth,  
So much alike ye are—so lovely both.

Together ye are peerless, but apart  
Each may be matched by each, to rule the heart  
Keep, gentle cherubs, a conjoined sway:  
Our love's divided when there's one away.



## THE TWIN SISTERS

Oh, wherefore both so lovely? wherefore came  
Such beauty separate and yet the same?  
Was it so great for one alone to bear,  
That each came laden with an equal share?

It may be Nature, anxious to excel,  
Moulded one lovely face, and loved it well,  
Then, hopeless to achieve a higher aim,  
Sought but to form one more, in all the same.

Or haply 'twas in kindness to the one,  
That Nature would not trust her forth alone,  
Lest she should mar her looks with vanity,  
To think none other was so fair as she.

If you but hold the mirror up to each,  
'Twill name its sister in its lisping speech;  
And still, while equal loveliness is theirs,  
May one see only what the other shares!

Beauty that only looks upon itself  
Becomes unlovely; yet, thou little elf,  
Not e'en thy sister should be praised by thee,  
Lest the harsh world pronounce it vanity.

Talk not to others of her silken hair,  
Lest they should say, "Thou know'st thine own as fair,"  
Nor praise the lustre of her bright blue eye,  
Lest thy own glance win back the flattery.

Ah, me! I wonder if alike ye'll prove  
When ripen'd into votaries of love?  
Then will sad lovers, puzzled which to choose,  
Find solace in the thought, "Can both refuse?"

Then will the promise which the one has named  
Be haply often from the other claim'd,  
And the fond wish of secret whisperer  
Be met with, "Oh, it was my sister, sir!"

Go, go your ways, and in your little breasts  
Still bear the innocence your joy attests!  
Go wander forth 'neath childhood's sunny sky,  
And gather flowers whose fragrance will not die!

October, 1840.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Not many weeks ago I was sitting with my old friend Sir Theodore Martin, talking of days and things gone by, when he told me he first knew my father and mother at this early period of our lives. His parents and my parents sat in the same kirk, St. Cuthbert's, mine occupying seats in the front row of the gallery, and his in the body of the church, from which our pew was visible. He mentioned an incident which had the effect of driving my father and mother away from the intolerance of the Church of Scotland to seek shelter eventually within the milder fold of the Episcopalian.

It seems that at this time "Chambers' Journal" had made great way with the public, but although it carefully avoided dealing with polemical subjects ecclesiastical, or otherwise, the minister took on himself to denounce it in very vehement terms from the pulpit. In his eyes this most pure-minded family journal had committed the sin of neutrality, showing—at a time of great religious strife—no religious leanings one way or another, and avoiding all controversy.

Sir Theodore Martin, who was then a youthful contributor, sat silent and unashamed under the scathing words, but with hot indignation raging in his soul. Indeed, a spirit of indignation was generally aroused at an attack being made in circumstances where no rejoinder was possible. Sir Theodore also after that seceded to the Episcopalian Church.

About this time my father had written or was writing the "Rebellion of '45," which accounts for

## JACOBITE PRINCES

the presence on the scene of the two pseudo Jacobite Princes, John Sobieski Stuart, and his brother, Comte d'Albany ; a name adopted by Prince Charlie on his return to France.

I have now in my possession an admirable pencil sketch, in the rosewood frame of the period, of these two magnificent Highlanders, which was drawn from life for my father. They are in full Highland dress, in the Royal Stuart tartan, with glengarrys and eagle plumes all complete.

To us as children their visits were especially welcome, as they always came laden with sweetmeats. I can see the nice stumpy packets now, and feel the joy of being lifted on to the friendly knee to be wooed and won by these sweets. Years later, when my father was staying with me in Mayfair, one of the brothers—I forget which—came to call, when he and my father seemed to live again in the jolly days of long ago, and particularly referred to drinking porter out of the old silver tankards. It happened that these same tankards were then in my custody, so, slipping quietly out of the room, I presently returned with a servant bearing on a tray two bottles of stout, and the identical old silver tankards ! In great delight they renewed the past and drank to each other's health.

The wanderings of Prince Charlie in the Highlands<sup>1</sup> also brought about the life-long friendship of the Thrieplands of Fingask. Although staunch to the reigning monarch, and sound Protestants, their sympathies were carried away by the romance of the wanderings, the traditions of the Rebellion, and the

<sup>1</sup> "The Rebellion of 1745," by Robert Chambers.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Jacobite relics around them. Many were the visits paid by my father to Fingask from the later thirties onward. The three Misses Thriepland were never young within my recollection, but they were quaint, high-spirited, old-world, and brim full of fun and humour. On one occasion at my father's house they amused us as children with stories of the ghosts at Fingask, and would show us how they went to their bedrooms at night all shaking and quaking in a string, the one holding on to the other, the bravest in front, the second bravest at the tail, and the least brave in between !

The following letter to my mother, dated Fingask, December, 1847, from my father, gives an amusing glimpse into the life there which he always considered a relief from the *severity* of Edinburgh.

“To gratify your wish I take the half hour before breakfast of the first morning to write a few lines to you, that you may be aware of my being safely housed here amongst very pleasant company : Sir Peter, and all the ladies in their usual force and good-humour, and, besides the Earl of Mansfield, Mr. and Mrs. Fitzmaurice Scott, Lord Charles Kerr, and Captain Ridley. We also had at dinner Sir John and Lady Richardson . . . Lord Mansfield is a tall, slender, dark-complexioned man, of foreign aspect, clever, agreeable, and very fond of fun. . . .”

In the next letter a day or two later he says : “We carry on here very merrily. Last night there was ‘High Jinks’ of the most extreme character. What would you think of a whole night of singing, dancing, and capering in all sorts of dresses, ending at about one in the morning with three or four of



## FINGASK

them, including Lord M., roaring out the chorus of 'It's no use knocking at the door' at the top of their voices with the gesticulations of mountebanks? I thought the young Englishman, Ridley, would have expired with laughing.

"The whole made good the saying that men are only overgrown laddies. This morning I don't know how we are all to face each other. There was a locking of the doors at last to make the ladies submit to an accolade before escaping, but they picked Lord Charles' pocket of the key of the back door, and stole away. . . ." The ladies Thriepland all sang Jacobite songs in a way to bring the tear from every eye, or to convulse one with laughter. For example :

"Will ye no come back again?"

most pathetic, and

"Awa' whigs awa,  
Awa' whigs awa,  
You're but a pack of traitor luns,  
You'll dae nae gude of a',"

with great spirit.

While still dreaming in Bookland my eyes wander into the recesses of the ingle nook and rest on the small bust of my father in the niche next to that which contains the little bust of Christopher North. Turning to the right, I can see among the row of my father's books one which he never avowed throughout his life, "The Vestiges of Creation." When published in the early forties it fell like a bomb among the Darwinites, who were digging deep at the foundations of "The Origin of Species," and unhappily did not enjoy the same generosity which so

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

distinguished the Scottish authors just named. Many years later Professor Huxley told me at his own table how he had attacked it with all the impetuosity of youth, and had charged the unknown author with plagiarizing Lamarek. Now, peeping into the tenth edition of the *Vestiges*, I see in the preface the reply to this, for the author explains that when he wrote the book he had only *heard* of Lamarek's hypothesis, but it seemed to him to proceed in a vicious circle, and he dismissed it as totally inadequate to account for the existence of animated species. His attention was first attracted to the idea, he explains, on becoming acquainted with the Laplaecian hypothesis of the Solar system.

Darwin also, when youth had fled and carried bitterness away with it, wrote to my sister Mrs. Dowie the following letter soon after my father's death, but before the secret of authorship was officially announced:—

March 24th, 1871.

Down, Beekenham, Kent.

MADAM,

I beg leave to thank you very sincerely for your extremely kind communication through Sir J. Lubbock. It has been highly gratifying to me to hear that so distinguished a man as Dr. Chambers felt an interest about my book during the last hours of his valuable life. I have always felt a most sincere respect for your father, and his society, the few times I enjoyed it, was most pleasant to me. Several years ago I perceived that I had not done full justice to a scientific work which I believed and still believe he was intimately connected with, and

## CHARLES DARWIN

few things have struck me with more admiration than the perfect temper and liberality with which he treated my conduct.

I have the honour to remain, Madam,  
Your obliged and obedient servant,

CHARLES DARWIN.

It is true that in the fourth edition of "The Origin of Species," 1868, he makes the following remarks regarding *The Vestiges* :—

"The work from its powerful and brilliant style, though displaying in the earlier editions little accurate knowledge and a great want of scientific caution, immediately had a very wide circulation. In my opinion it had done excellent service in this country in calling attention to the subject, in removing prejudice, and in thus preparing the ground for the reception of analogous views."

When my father was contemplating writing this book so far in advance of the period, he felt, after the recent experience in St. Cuthbert's, that secrecy was absolutely necessary owing to the state of religious feeling in Scotland at that time. Hence in the early forties my father and mother, with the secret locked within their own bosoms, migrated with their children to St. Andrews, and for two years lived a free and open life, the secret notwithstanding. In these mail-coach days the journey from Edinburgh was so long that I remember sitting on my nurse's knee helpless and sick, the victim of over-fatigue. It was this suffering that impressed on my mind the remembrance of the coach journey before railways were universally established.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

St. Andrews was an ideal place for all of us. We had a house called Abbey Park, so quiet and secluded in the midst of intellectual society, that my father could work at his secret with all the security of a criminal unrecognized in the midst of the police. In these days St. Andrews was not the fashionable resort it has since become. The University was the ruling element, and golf subsidiary. Then, failing cheap daily papers, the town bellman or crier was in full force, bringing all the "gude" folks to their doors to hear the news. The news was often an announcement to the effect that a certain ship would leave the port on a certain day at a certain hour "weather permitting." This was usually followed by a further announcement concerning another ship which would sail "weather or no!"

The idiot was a melancholy feature of the place. I can see his poor bewildered face now as he pursued his way followed by jeering boys. If he saw a "wife" at her door he would go up and say, "Gi's a bit o' creash"—*Anglice*, "give me a bit of fat." That was all he ever asked.

Another old-world remembrance was watching the housemaid lighting the fires with "spunks" before matches were invented. Again there flits across my mind a lovely vision of my mother going out to dinner parties in her sedan-chair, accompanied by a host of small runners, at the fashionable hour of five, the prevailing and unfashionable hour being three. She always took with her a tiny linen book improvised by herself, containing in her own handwriting some old ballads. She found it difficult to remember words, but never the accompaniment,

## ST. ANDREWS

which she could always transpose from one key to another to suit her voice at the moment.

Regarding this period of my life it is interesting to remember the sorrows as well as the joys encountered by the way. My first school-days were sorrows I could see no way out of. The lessons I had to learn and the questions I had to answer at the day school held by two old ladies involved my mind in complete chaos. I can never forget the hopeless blank, and the fear that helped to obscure the little mind I had. It never occurred to my teachers that my brain was not sufficiently developed to perceive what they were driving at, neither was any allowance made for the timidity excited by the presence of so many girls older and bigger than myself. In order to improve matters I was to be punished, and accordingly was kept in one day after the class had broken up. I was now a forlorn child prisoner condemned to starve while others fed, and in tears could make nothing of it. With maturer brains I could easily have turned the tables on the two old ladies by proving they knew nothing of natural laws and were little fitted for the management of the young. But this is pure insubordination, and to return to the lamentable situation, relief came from an unexpected quarter. The news of my forcible detention had been carried home by my bigger sisters, and so enraged my devoted nurse Hopey (who had nursed me in infancy at her breast) that she first of all prepared a mighty jam sandwich, and filling her pocket with other good things, started forth to the rescue. She appeared on the scene *vi et armis*, a terror to the old ladies, who saw she was not to be

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

trifled with, for no power on earth could have kept her from breaking my prison if necessary. The Bastille itself would have been nothing to her had I been there! In joy I was soon clasped to her maternal bosom and soothed with that sweet symphony of love known only to mothers.

A picture in water colours of myself and twin sister at that time represents us out of doors in white frocks with short sleeves, the lap of one full of roses, and the legs of both clothed in wide leggings trimmed with double frills. The two faces adorned with fair ringlets are exactly alike, and I can see from this picture how difficult lessons must have been, for the expression on both faces is that of vacuous innocence.

These, then, are some of the impressions which were stamped on my mind at five years of age and have lasted throughout a lifetime. The little school episodes, the idiot, and the crier were of far greater moment to me than the secret going on visibly in the background. Of it I knew nothing, and could know nothing for years, but it is strange to think now that my father was writing then—at the age of thirty-two—one of the books of the century.

My father's delight in his leisure hours was to take a troop of us out to the golf links, or for a ramble among the ruins, trying "to dibble into our heads a few ideas" on the romantic history of the place. Thirty-seven years later, when he had built himself a house opposite the Martyrs' Monument and was dying, his mind seemed to revert to these early days when the present had ceased to be. "Ah!" he whispered, "I will take their little hands in mine

## THE GEOLOGIST'S WIFE

and run along the Lee." How we loved him, and how we loved his walks in Edinburgh somewhat later when he would take us to Arthur's Seat to do a little geologizing, calling at a baker's shop for "parliament-cakes" on the way. This shop was long known to us as the Parliament House! Here no questions were asked, and the votes all went one way!

As children we knew more of what was under the earth than above, and could recognize at once the striations of ancient glaciers, while around the coast of Fife in later years we knew every ancient sea margin. With such a teacher we never found any difficulty in acquiring natural knowledge!

The following amusing verses were written by my mother, the geologist's wife, when her husband was setting off on one of his excursions:—

Adieu then, my dear, to the Highlands you go,  
Geology calls you, you must not say no;  
Alone in your absence I cannot but mourn,  
And yet it were selfish to wish you return.

No, come not until you search through the gneiss,  
And mark all the smoothings produced by the ice;  
O'er granite-filled chinks felt Huttonian joy,  
And measured the parallel roads of Glenroy.

Yet still, as from mountain to mountain you stride,  
In visions I'll walk like a shade by your side,  
Your bag and your hammer I'll carry with glee,  
And climb the raised beaches, my own love, with thee.

Me too, you'll remember, for love claims no less,  
And all your proceedings a fondness confess:  
Each level you take, be it not from the sea,  
But around the place where your Annie may be.

Let everything mind you of tender relations—  
See even the hard rocks have *their* inclinations,  
Oh, let me believe that wherever you roam  
The axis of yours can be nowhere but home!



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

And if you should find on the mountains of Lorn  
A boulder that long since from Nevis was torn,  
I will image that fond one who left his own shore  
"Perhaps to return to Lochaber no more."

And if in your wanderings you chance to be led  
To Ross-shire or Moray to see the Old Red,  
Oh, still, as its mail-covered fishes you view,  
Forget not the colour is "love's proper hue."

Such being your feelings, I'll care not although  
You're gone from my side for a fortnight or so,  
But know if much longer you leave me alone  
You may find coming back a wife turned to stone.

Meanwhile the book was getting on and my father feeling no doubt much as Galileo must have done with the fear of the inquisition before him.

The methods adopted to preserve secrecy were curious. First, the whole of the MS. was transcribed by my mother and then sent to a trusty friend, Mr. Ireland, editor of the "Manchester Examiner." He was the sole medium of communication between publisher and author, and held the secret as desired not only till after my father's death, but subsequently until that of his brother William, the other partner in the firm of W. and R. Chambers.

When I emerged from childhood into womanhood and found that I was a member of the literary and scientific world by right of birth, with ears to hear and eyes to see, the discussion was still rife as to who was the author of *The Vestiges*. The nearest approach I ever made towards discovery was when Dr. Wm. Carpenter, the great physicist, told me that he happened to be at Churchill the publisher's one day, and seeing the MS. lying on the table, at once recognized my mother's fine Italian handwriting.

## THE VESTIGES OF CREATION

Again, my friend Samuel Smiles, the charming writer, told me, and afterwards wrote me the following :—

“ William Howitt and I had some conversation many years ago about the authorship of ‘The Vestiges of Creation.’ He said, ‘I know the author.’ ‘Who is he?’ I asked. ‘Robert Chambers of Edinburgh.’ He then proceeded to relate that he had called at his house, and was shown into the drawing-room, and there found a copy of the book with numerous corrections in Robert Chambers’ handwriting. These were the circumstances which led Mr. Howitt to the certain conclusion that he and no other writer was the author.”

There never seemed to be a doubt in scientific circles as to the authorship, but the confession never came, even on his death-bed.



### CHAPTER III

THE St. Andrews sojourn over, we are now in the fifties and settled down very peaceably at 1, Doune Terrace, with life opening up before us in a world still astir about The Vestiges.

Our first school in Edinburgh was over a shop in Queen Street, and had but one master, Dr. Graham, a very able man and friend of my father. Here only English was taught, which consisted of spelling, reading, sums (I cannot call it arithmetic), writing, history, and geography. Boys and girls were all taught together, being divided by a screen not so tall that we could not tilt ourselves up to see the boys getting "palmies."<sup>1</sup> Some of the boys have since distinguished themselves in the world, one being Dr. William Playfair, whose friendship continued to the end of his life. Our next school was more advanced. It was The Institution in Moray Place, just round the corner of our Terrace, which was so exposed to the winds of heaven that we were often in winter battened up against the area railings in speeding along to our classes. Here we were taught dancing in the most severely proper style by a lady with exquisite feet, whose chief idea of a liberal education was to know how to dance the minuet.

Either before or after this period we had a

<sup>1</sup> Receiving the tawse on the open palm.

## MRS. CHISHOLM

dancing-master at home, a *protégé*, I suspect, of my mother. Dr. Robert Farquharson (now M.P.) and his elder brother William, since dead, used to join us, urged thereto, no doubt, through the combined philanthropy of the mothers. The dancing-master was typical of "the *protégé*," he wore tights, played the fiddle as he danced, and rejoiced in a green wig from which we could never take our eyes.

I cannot say we excelled as pupils in the ordinary school sense, but what with rambles across the fields of science and contact with the men and women of the day, a smattering of education was acquired. Fortunately my mother, with her great talents, had inspired some of her children with her gifts, so that our home formed a magnet for artists of every kind, and also a rallying-ground for philanthropists and "characters" generally.

To our house in 1850 came Mrs. Chisholm, the early—if not earliest—pioneer of the emigrant movement. I can remember how desperately in earnest she was as she poured out her ideas to my father and mother about her scheme for sending the superfluous population of this country to Australia. I can only recall snatches of her conversation, as I was then just fourteen years of age; but these are worth noting as showing how well she understood human nature. She was telling my mother that among the husbands and wives with whom she had to deal there were constant quarrels. The wives had many sorrowful tales to tell of hard words and neglect. Her cure for these was to go to the husband and persuade him to give his wife a little present! Probably he had never done such a

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

thing in his life before, and it never would have occurred to his mind to do it at all save for the whisperings of the philanthropist. But the effect was magieal. It raised the husband in his own estimation, and plaeced the wife on a pinnacle of superiority by restoring her self-respect. With regard to travelling arrangements, she advoeated barrels instead of boxes or trunks, as they could be rolled from one plaece to another, and save the fatigue of carrying. These were both practical measures, and dwelt in my mind long after she herself had gone to her rest.

Beyond these trifling incidents I should have known nothing more of this interesting woman save for the treasures lying idly about in the nooks and erannies of my library. Since writing the above I was searching through an old offiee ledger of "All the Year Round," which fell into my possession among the "books, letters, and papers" left to me by my aunt, Mrs. Wills. I was looking for something else when my eye fell on emigrants' letters written jointly by C. D. (Charles Dickens) and Mrs. Chisholm. From this souree I am able to add that the aim of this good woman was to establish a Family Colonization Loan Soeiety to enable the poor to find work where work was to be had, the loan being paid baek eheerfully when prosperity came. The whole seheme was so admirable and seemed to work so well it ought to form a model for the present plan of sending servants and others out to South Afriea.<sup>1</sup>

Another great philanthropist was Miss Dix, from America, and her efforts, I believe, were in the

<sup>1</sup> Vide Vol. I. "Household Words," 1850.

## MORNINGSIDE ASYLUM

direction of lunatics. She stayed in our house, and was even more desperately in earnest than Mrs. Chisholm. She was very grave, and sometimes wept. It is strange to think of this serious woman dwelling even for a time in the midst of us tumultuous girls. It seemed, however, to answer her purpose very well, for my kind-hearted mother, who was always interested in convents and lunatic asylums, could open the doors of the latter whenever she chose. One day Miss Dix disappeared, but shortly returned beaming with gladness as she had never beamed before. She had been to London and had interviewed the Home Secretary about her mission. Evidently her hopes had not been crushed, for she was invited to dine with the Right Honourable that night to meet other Secretaries of State. The mission made little impression on our youthful minds, but what did impress us was the fact that in the course of the day she managed to get a new dress made for the occasion, and appeared fully equipped in a black moire antique, cut square in the neck, new cap and all, by dinner-time ! Unlike Mrs. Chisholm, she was small and slender.

One night there was to be a dance at the Morningside Asylum, to which Miss Dix and the family were especially invited by Dr. Skey, the chief medical officer. I accompanied the party on that occasion, and enjoyed myself immensely dancing with the lunatics. In one quadrille I found myself *vis-à-vis* with Mr. John Tollemache Sinclair,<sup>1</sup> who had joined our party, and who told me afterwards that he had discovered the girl he was dancing with

<sup>1</sup> Later Sir John Tollemache, M.P.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

was his father's dairymaid from Thurso. Between the dances, when we were all resting, the door opposite to where I was sitting, opened and Professor Simpson entered with some friends. Instantly there was an unearthly yell, and a woman who had recognized the great doctor rushed forward and began embracing him in wild excitement. The several doctors who were present had some difficulty in detaching her and carrying her off. It turned out that she had formerly been a patient of his, and that he had found her an excellent subject for mesmerism. Mesmerism and electro-biology were then in vogue, spirit-rapping being on its way but not quite yet arrived from America.

When Miss Dix took leave of us she held a sort of durbar and presented a small gift to each one of us, including my father, whose present was a paper-knife with deer's foot handle. To our infinite surprise he was not at all grateful and delivered a good-humoured lecture on the occasion. My present was a silver shawl brooch, which went to sleep in my jewel-case half a century ago, and still sleeps on as an innocent memorial of happy days associated with the companionship of a truly good philanthropist.

My mother also felt a mysterious interest in refugees, and being the most innocent and unworldly of women, nothing would have pleased her more than to find detectives lurking about, or that she was considered a dangerous political character ! When she discovered that the Hungarians Remenyi and a compatriot were living in seclusion she sought them out, and regardless of the fact that they were young men with a past and that we were girls with

## REMENYI

a future, she gave them the freedom of the house. Remenyi was naturally in his element in the midst of music, and could always find a piano accompaniment for his violin. My mother made great efforts among her friends to help these Hungarians, and on going to Lady Drysdale (a rival philanthropist) was told "No, she could do nothing for her Hungarians, as she had a Pole of her own !"

Not many years ago, when reading the morning paper in my house in Mayfair, I saw that Remenyi, the celebrated violinist, had arrived in town, and was to take part in a concert given by the late Colonel North for some particular object. Filled with sentiment and recollections of my mother's kindness to the youth, I wrote reminding him of old times, and asked him to call. This he did, but unfortunately when I was out. I now looked forward to the concert, for which I had secured tickets, and thought how pleasant it would be to talk over old times. The concert came off, and I took the first opportunity of presenting myself to the artist and introducing my daughter. "Ah," he exclaimed, "you are there ! Well, let me tell you when I rang the bell at your doorstep the other day I hurt my finger. You should not keep bells like that. Just look at my finger !" I felt like the poor relation who comes back from the bush late in life expecting to find open arms everywhere. My aunt, Mrs. Wills—of whom more presently—expressed a real truth when she said wittily that "a poor relation in the bush was worth two in the hand any day !"

I ought to have kept in the bush.

One of my earliest recollections about this time,



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

and even antecedent to this time, is of Thomas de Quincey when he was lodging within the Sanctuary of Holyrood. He was haunted by an idea that he was being pursued by his various and no doubt much-tried landladies; and, whether rightly or wrongly, I always understood that he took refuge within the Sanctuary of Holyrood for debt. The following letter to my father seems to confirm this :—

T. De Quincey to R. Chambers, Jan. 23rd, 1839.

Wednesday, Jan. 23rd, 1839.

Miss Miller's Lodgings, Holyrood Gardens, Abbey.

SIR,

I have accidentally heard a report upon which I now found a proposal. The report was that you were weary of the labor connected with the essays written for your Journal, or (if not weary) that you found the labor not easily compatible with other demands upon your time. If it should happen that I have been misinformed (which is not impossible, as my chief authority confessedly spoke upon no direct knowledge), I am sure you will acquit me of any intentional liberty in what I am going to say. Nobody could have the presumption to press his aid upon so eminent a public instructor as yourself in any other character than that of one, who happened to have disposable leisure, offering to relieve another who had too little. If upon that footing you really have any wish for aid, I should be happy to furnish a series of essays on Life, Manners, Literature, and other subjects. And as I know experimentally that the discovery and shaping of subjects is in itself a laborious thing, I should be happy to make that a

## DE QUINCEY

part of my undertaking. All this, I repeat, is meant only upon the assumption that the report I have heard is accurate. I am at present, and for three or four months to come, condemned to fight off creditors with one hand, whilst with the other I furnish support to nine persons daily. Still I am obliged to count all literary labors within my reach. The first essay I propose to write would be entitled *Conversation as an Art*.

Begging again to apologize for my intrusion, if it should appear that I have been misinformed, but feeling sure that in any case you will not misconstrue my meaning,

I remain, Sir,  
Faithfully yours,  
THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

He used to spend many Sundays at my father's house, and had to rush back to get into Sanctuary before twelve o'clock, after which hour he could be arrested. For the sake of convenience he left a pair of his Wellington boots in my mother's keeping, that he might have a change when necessary. They were wonderfully small and neat, and remained in my mother's possession long after he was in his grave. Unfortunately this interesting relic of his dapper little person disappeared during one of the family moves, and never came to light again. Before me lies a letter from him to my mother, dated Mrs. Wilson's lodgings, Sunday, March 4th, in response to one from her. He evidently feels he has been remiss in replying, but does not exactly know the extent of the delay, for the date on her letter, "if

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

date your note ever had (a point on which it is lawful to be sceptical with regard to all notes emanating from ladies), had perished on that upper right-hand corner of the first page, which in my awkwardness I tore off in the act of opening it. Into the fire this fragment flew ; so that there and then perished all chronological evidence of my delinquency." The letter is written in a small cramped hand, and is full of erasures and interjections squeezed in between the narrow lines. He goes on to say that "for a few days to come he is fighting with the embarrassment (to him 'overwhelming') of correcting for the press papers written originally with so much carelessness that they do not allow themselves to be righted. This sort of labor kills me."

He describes an attack of influenza which was followed by painful blindness, but finally left him greatly improved in health and spirits ; "the first *sensible* suspension of my intolerable nervous sufferings that I have experienced for eleven years." Here the letter ends with simply "Sunday, March 4th." At this point it does not find its way to the post as a well-regulated letter should, but gets lost in the snowdrifts of his papers, probably those to which he alludes. However, it manages to come to light, and he starts again under the heading "Ten days later, viz. Wednesday, March 14th."

He proceeds to explain that "the letter had *lost itself*" amongst a crowd of MSS., letters, &c., and he was on the point of writing another when "the absconding individual" emerged from the chaos, but to his *surprise* without a signature. This is all explained by the absence of his daughters who keep

## DE QUINCEY

things straight for him. His eldest daughter, he adds, has given birth to a little girl, thus raising him to the dignity of grand-paternity; and, "were it not that I forgive much to a little *female* infant, who is usually so vivacious and intelligent, I should be very angry: for I can't endure being *venerable*. Boys are always so abominably stupid, and also selfish, that not even the grace of infancy could have gained my indulgence to a specimen of that class. Surely we have enough of them on this little planet; and especially since the gallows is continually losing favour.

"I beg my kind regards to Mr. Chambers and your fair daughters, who are growing out of my knowledge. Pray believe me, my dear Madam,

"Your faithful servant,

"THOMAS DE QUINCEY."

This letter is wonderfully characteristic of the man. He was always struggling in the midst of chaos, and getting what he called "snowed up" by his papers. When the snow got the better of him he would lock the door on the snow and start afresh in another room. His family lived in Lasswade, while he seemed to divide his time between them and a variety of lodgings in Edinburgh. On one occasion he brought one of his daughters to a dance at our house, but whether he enjoyed it is doubtful.

Another interesting guest was Mr. G. H. Lewes, author of "The Life of Goethe," &c. His presence in the house was usually hailed with joy, because there was sure to be a good time in store. He



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

would collect the younger children into a heap, one or two on his knees, others sitting round, and would then invent stories. One day the stories would be weird, and another day ethereal, but we liked the weird ones best. There was a never-failing supply of marvellous stories, and, needless to say, a ceaseless demand for more. I wish I could recall some of the fairy tales, which were so fascinating, but I do remember that they always wound up the same way, for no other way would satisfy the demands of the company.

The way was this. When the story or stories had come to an end and we were all in the depths of misery or heights of joy, there was a shout for "Old Woman." Then G. H. L. would begin in dulcet tones to chant, "Old woman ! Old woman ! Old woman ! said I. Whither, oh, whither, oh, whither so high ?" all eyes gazing upward, and his tones getting more and more beseeching ; hers more and more explanatory, and extremely polite, as she sang melodiously, "To sweep the cobwebs out of the sky, but I will be back again by-and-by." Here all the shrill sopranos chimed in to the accompaniment of rough riding on knees that jerked frantically about till the party was dispersed.

Some of us were taken to the theatre to see him act in "The Merchant of Venice" ; but Shylock did not appeal to the youthful senses as did the author at home on nursery thoughts intent.

Sometimes we would go to small and unpretentious parties at the house of Dr. John Brown, author of "Rab and his Friends," the most pathetic book ever written.

## DINAH MULOCK

Robert Cox, author of "Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties" (which he presented to me on my marriage), lived in the same street, Rutland Place, now much altered on account of the Caledonian railway-station.

Dr. and Mrs. George Combe were also among the family intimates. Dr. George Combe was the author of "A System of Phrenology," a highly popular and philosophical book, and other works, and Mrs. Combe was a daughter of the great Mrs. Siddons, and had much of her mother's stateliness and good looks.

An ever-welcome guest was Dinah Mulock,<sup>1</sup> who was initiated into our domestic circle at a time when she was suffering from sad domestic sorrows. We all loved her, and she became quite one of ourselves, although we were idle and frivolous, and she grave, and greatly given up to her literary work. She wrote most of "The Head of the Family," under our roof, and we were all much interested in the book.

Noel Paton (later in life Sir Noel, limner to the Queen in Scotland) was also one of the coterie at this time. When we migrated to the Clyde during the summer, and Noel took up his quarters with his friends the Allan Park Patons, who had a cottage on the Clyde, he, they, and we would fraternize, although ten or twelve miles of river divided us. It was easy enough to go to and fro by steamer, but on one occasion we at Dunoon elected to set off by boat to spend a few hours with the Patons near Greenock, little considering what it would entail. My sister

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Mrs. George Lillie Craik.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Annie<sup>1</sup> and myself undertook the oars, and our passengers were Dinah Mulock and my sister Tuckie.<sup>2</sup> The day was fine, and we made a good start, but when we got into the track of the steamers Tuckie was filled with alarm and kept exclaiming emphatically that “she *must* get out!” The consequence was that we had to make straight across the bay towards the lighthouse and hug the coast all the way, adding greatly to distance and fatigue. When we got to our destination, great was the wonder at our performance. On no account could we be allowed to return without help, and to this we had no objection.

The pen-and-ink sketch of this adventure is by Noel Paton, and was sent to my sister Mary,<sup>3</sup> a charming artist herself. She was always styled “the Andalusian Maid” by her father, owing to her beautiful hazel eyes and type. Noel Paton by right of intimacy was generally known in the family as Grandpapa.

In the foremost boat Grandpapa is seen rowing. I am curled up fast asleep in the prow, and the valiant Tuckie, wrapped in Noel’s sea-jacket, has plucked up courage to take the helm.

In the other boat Dinah Mulock and Mr. Allan Park Paton are sitting together in the stern, while Annie, quite undaunted, is rowing with another member of the Paton family.

“The Invalid” represents Noel Paton himself, and is an admirable likeness of what he was then.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Dowie.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Rudolf Lehmann (Amelia).

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Mrs. Edwards.







PAST and Present: An Invalid's Dream. Nov. 1851

To the Undeclinable Maid, with her Grandfather's Love.





## THE ANDALUSIAN MAID

The young lady in the corner was one of the Patons.

“The Andalusian Maid” was born an artist, and was a source of interest to all the professional artists of our circle. She and Amy Paton—(Noel’s sister, afterwards Mrs. D. O. Hill—who executed the noble statue of Livingstone)—used to work together at medallions and busts in clay. A few years after her marriage to Alexander Edwards, when my father was living in London, she wrote him a joyous letter saying that she had just finished the bust of her little girl, and that Brodie the great sculptor had sent her in the clay for her first full-sized figure. The bust she was sending to her father. Two days later my father and mother received a telegram from Mr. Edwards desiring them to come at once if they wished to see Mary again alive. She had been seized with illness in the night, and there was little hope of her life. They hurried on to Edinburgh with all speed, but, alas! the “Andalusian Maid” lay dead. The clay was there under a damp sheet waiting for the hands that were lifeless; and the bust was on its way to win the praises she would never hear.

A great feature in our home life was the gentleness and affection the parents showed towards their children, with the natural *sequitur*, the love and perfect trust of the children towards their parents. When my father was away from home he always tried to write to us each in turn impartially, but the twins were counted as one and indivisible. He often began his letters to us, “Dear Twinnies,” but the following is more individual:—

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

London,  
April 18th, 1852.

DARLINGS JENNY AND LIZZIE

I write the day after your birthday to eongratulate you upon it, and wish you many happy renewals of it, not one of them ever to see you divided in the sisterly love you have always hitherto shown towards each other. You perhaps think at present that the world is full of fine things, and probably you expect your share of them ; but I, who am so much older than you, can assure you that there is nothing in the world finer than such affection as you two have always felt for each other. So I hope you will endeavour to keep it ever fresh and unbroken. And if you continue to love Papa and Mama too, so much the better, &c.

Your ever affectionate papa,  
R. C.

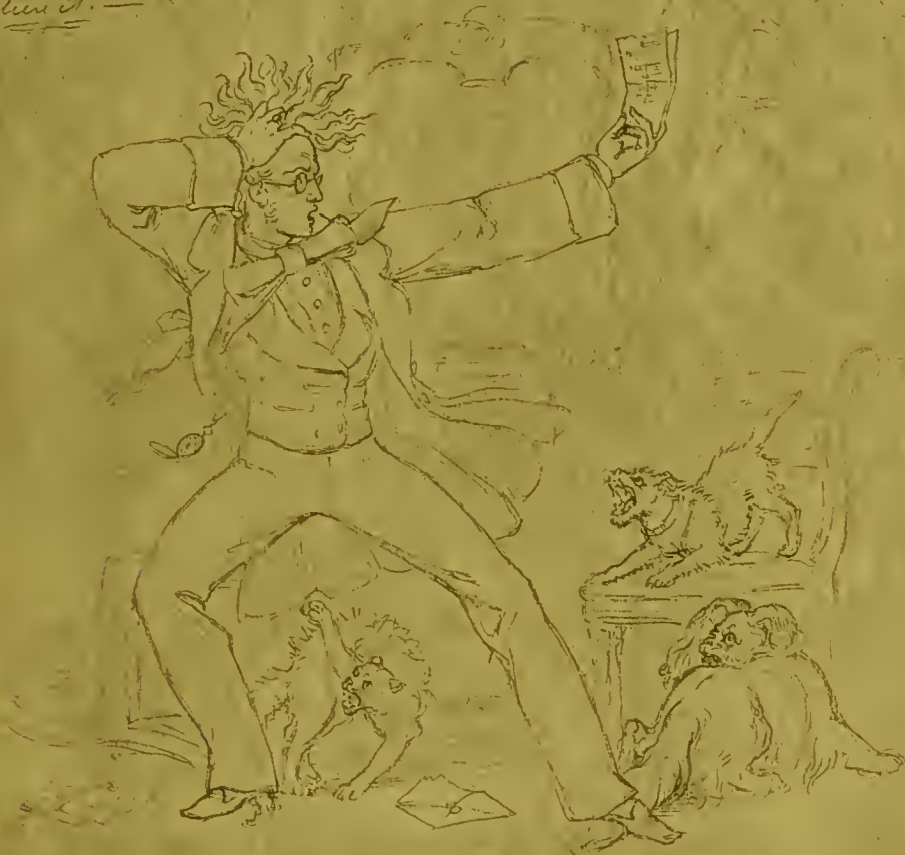
The first book ever presented to me by the author was " Friends in Councel," by Arthur Helps (Clerk of the Privy Council). I was only fifteen years of age when this honour was eonferred on me, but although I treasured the book, and appreeiated the inseription, it was far beyond my eapaeity in these days to understand. Now I read it with delight, and can remember how my father and Arthur Helps used to enter into eharming philosophical discussions like the Friends in Council they were.

I do not know how it eame about that my mother and all the rest of the family happened to be absent from home, leaving my father and myself alone to receeive a visit from this distinguished writer. What





The Post has just come in - I am preparing reading a letter. From Jot's! So I read "Bright?" - "Do my specks" deprecate me? - "No! - Yes! - No! - It is! - It is!" - "Be calm, my heart!" - The letters are plain as paint on a blue door - "April meets the Chamberlains go to London, for good" - "What, all my little Oles is one fell swoosh!" - "Not any - It is impossible - and the which is, impossible cannot be - and may rarely happens. I will not be less!" -







## CHALCOTS

deeply impressed me was his grave and dignified aspect, and more than all I was touched by the kindness and courtesy with which he treated myself.

The next time we met was a year later in the garden of Chalcots, a house my father had taken at Hampstead for a few months to be near the British Museum while he was compiling "The Book of Days." I recollect with painful distinctness that I blushed when I saw him, half with shyness and half with fear that he might ask if I had read "Friends in Council" and examine me on the spot! It was on this occasion he first met my twin sister and afterwards sent her another of his books.

While staying here—at Chalcots—a memorable thing happened. One night my mother had a dream. She imagined she was at an evening party and was asked to play the accompaniment for a lady who was going to sing. The piece of music placed before her had on it a picture of a young man lying on a couch with an angel hovering over him, and the young man's face was that of Noel Paton. In the midst of this vivid scene she awoke to find herself in bed, no piano, no music before her, no company, only my beloved father comfortably asleep in his cotton nightcap; the cap of the period, with the pointed end and tassel I knew so well. He was not allowed, however, to sleep long, for the words of the song were still on her lips, and the music of the accompaniment in her ears. Their bedroom was *en suite* with the drawing-room, and as there was no resisting the temptation to get up and try the song at the piano the nightcap at her side had to bestir itself. Now it so happened that a young lady visitor

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

was occupying a bedroom not far off, when she was aroused from her slumbers by the exquisite sound of music not in the far distance. When she fully realized that the voice was human she arose, and peeping through the drawing-room door, beheld her hostess and her host, enveloped in dressing gowns, sitting together at the piano, the one singing, and the other adorned in an astonishing nightcap taking down the words with a pencil. No wonder that my father always considered that his wife was most wide awake when asleep!

The words were addressed to Noel Paton, and although I have long since forgotten them, the young lady of the midnight scene<sup>1</sup> (who often comes to visit me) has been able to recall them as follows:—

With thy genius bending o'er thee,  
With thy great and noble Art,  
With thy rich and glorious fancy,  
With thy loving tender heart;

Death can not come nigh thee,  
Still aside must turn his dart,  
Before thee lies a glorious pathway,  
On, for thou must play thy part.

My mother sent a copy of these lines to Miss Paton with a desire to know if anything had happened at the time of the dream.

When the reply came it was to state that her brother Noel had been ill and was lying in a listless state when the letter came. The dream and the words had had the instant effect of rousing him, and casting aside despair he had set to work to "do his part."

<sup>1</sup> Miss Powell, now Mrs. George Baird.



*Tarut Chambers*

---

*"The five marks".*

*By Dicky Doyle*





## DICKY DOYLE

Our most intimate friends at that time were our neighbours Sir Rowland Hill, the initiator of the penny postage stamp, and his brothers Edwin and Fredrick, whose book on "Crime" so truly attributed a great deal of crime to second marriages among the lowest class, leading to cruelty and the neglect of step-children.

To come back to Doune Terrace, our evenings there were always delightful; sometimes devoted to music and dancing in the front drawing-room, sometimes to the pencil, and reading, in the back. My mother would occasionally have the younger children in to dance in a quaint fashion to her music. They were not allowed to appear until a certain rolling sound among the bass notes was heard, when in they would run and, standing on one foot and elevating the other, would present themselves as ballet-dancers in a row. They were bound to stand in this position till the music changed, and it was not always easy. Our mother had strong dramatic instincts, and rejoiced in the friendship of Helen Faucit, Miss Glyn, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, T. P. Cooke, and other artists.

Among the musicians who came to our house besides Remenyi were Blumenthal, Lichtenstein, Jenny Lind, and Otto Goldschmidt.

A friend of the back drawing-room at one time was Dicky Doyle, whose work may be seen in the inimitable cover of *Punch* with his initials in the corner. Not long ago I read an amusing account by Sir F. C. Burnand (the present editor of *Punch*) of his early, though vain, efforts to meet Dicky Doyle. While he was hunting him up and down,

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

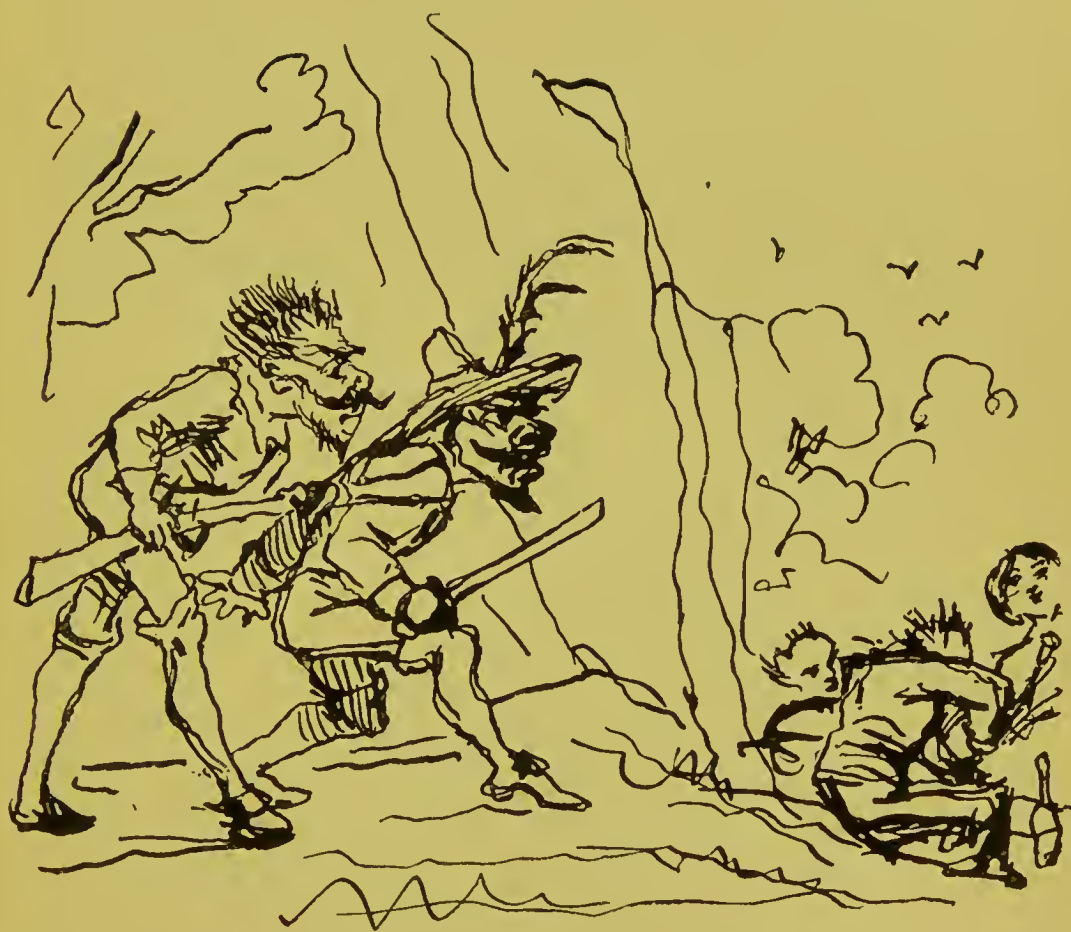
rushing hither and thither always on the wrong scent, it was distracting to know that Dicky about that time was quietly spending his evenings at my father's house amidst a bevy of girls sitting round a table doing the five dots. We did great things with the five dots, but we never could puzzle Dicky. He seemed at once to grasp the idea and proceed with lightning rapidity to assign one dot to the head, two to the hands, and two to the feet. Mary was also very clever at the five dots, which were put down at random by some one present in a way meant to puzzle.

One evening Dicky thrilled us all with a banshee story, and I can never hear or read of the banshee now without thinking of Dicky Doyle.

Thackeray was another friend who was a good deal at our house during visits to Edinburgh at the time when we were emerging into womanhood. He was greatly struck with the likeness of one of my sisters to his wife, and on being introduced to her as Amelia<sup>1</sup>—a favourite and favoured name of his—he gallantly raised her hand and kissed it. He seemed fond of children, and one morning was much amused with the vivacity of the breakfast-table, round which bad jokes flew. Someone was telling of an old lady who made her tea once a week. “Ah!” chirruped one of the circle—without the least shame—“I should think it was weak tea!” The joke, feeble though it was, went down, and we all laughed heartily.

A few years later the following letter from Thackeray was written to my father :—

<sup>1</sup> Tuckie.



*By Dicky Doyle*



## THACKERAY

Paris, December 27th, 1858.

MY DEAR CHAMBERS,

Will you send the above scrap to Mr. Payn, which I don't remember where in Forres Street he lives? and, in asking you to perform this kind office for me, will you permit me to seize the opportunity afforded me of expressing to you, Mrs. Chambers, and your somewhat numerous family, my wish that you may enjoy many happy recurrences of a season which Christians venerate, but which you do not, I believe, acknowledge in Scotland, and the assurance of the profound consideration with which I have the honour to be, Sir, Madam, and your kind, merry, pretty young ladies,

Your faithful servant,

W. M. T.

While on the subject of Thackeray, I may mention that in one of my recent chats with my old—indeed, oldest—friend, Sir Theodore Martin, he told me that he was an eye-witness of the *rapprochement* between Thackeray and Dickens after the quarrel that made them both so unhappy. I had heard various versions, so asked my friend to write it down, which he kindly did, adding that he had never committed the incident to writing before.

“Late in the autumn of the year in which Thackeray died (1863) I was standing talking to him in the hall of the Athenæum, when Dickens came out of the room where he had been reading the morning papers, and, passing close to us without making any sign of recognition, crossed the hall to the stairs that led up to the library. Suddenly



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Thackeray broke away from me, and overtook Dickens just as he had reached the foot of the staircase. Dickens turned to him, and I saw Thackeray speak, and presently hold out his hand to Dickens. They shook hands, a few words were exchanged, and immediately Thackeray returned to me, saying, 'I am glad I have done this. I said,' he continued, 'it is time this foolish estrangement should cease, and that we should be to each other as we used to be. Come, shake hands!' Dickens, he said, seemed at first rather taken aback, but he held out his hand, and some friendly words were exchanged. 'I loved the man,' said Thackeray, 'and could not resist the impulse.' It was like his tender nature, to which the rupture of a once-cherished friendship was an unforgettable pain.

"A few weeks after I was reminded of the incident by seeing Dickens standing by the open grave into which Thackeray had just been lowered, and looking down into it with a look of earnest sadness. It was not difficult to imagine what thoughts were passing through his mind. The reconciliation at the Athenæum would be among them."

Sir Theodore, I may add by way of parenthesis, is in his eighty-eighth year and as active and bright as ever.

## CHAPTER IV

IN these delightful days Edinburgh was, on the whole, less ceremonious than it is now. There was not the strict line of demarcation between being "in" and being "out," and no one thought it necessary, if even possible, in these days to be presented to her Majesty before coming out. We might make our *début*, but the *débutante* proper, resplendent and advertised, was unknown.

I do not know how to confess it, having grown-up girls (now married women) of my own, but I am pretty certain of the fact that we girls gave the balls, and our mother the dinner parties. As we never interfered with each other's arrangements everything came off remarkably well except on one or two memorable occasions when little *contretemps* took place. On one occasion we girls had sent out cards of invitation to a dance in our mother's name—as a mere matter of ceremony—to the officers at the Castle generally. There was one officer in particular we were bent on having, and when his reply came addressed to our mother, it ran thus: "Mr. Maconochie will have much pleasure in waiting on Mrs. Chambers on the 16th, &c." Now it so happened that a waiter of the same name had disgraced himself on a recent occasion, and our mother had determined never to have him again. Being

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

oblivious as to the officer, she despatched the following letter, addressing it to the Castle, where the waiter was supposed to be, and thinking his overture extremely impertinent, wrote briefly, "Mrs. Chambers will *not* require Mr. Maconochie to wait on her at the ball on 16th." This went like a bomb into the Castle, where much consternation ensued until the misunderstanding was cleared up.

Among the celebrated dinners given by my mother was one in honour of George Outram<sup>1</sup> (brother of Sir James). It was to be purely and simply a Scotch dinner, and a surprise to come out at the end was prepared for the chief guest. The hour was five, and there was no mistake about the solidity of the dinner, which in these days steamed up the table and down the table in gorgeous profusion. I can remember that, daylight notwithstanding, we girls were arrayed in evening dress with white wreaths on our heads, terrible to think of now, but beautiful then. The *menu* so far as I can recollect consisted of:—

Hotch Potch.

Cockie Leekie.

Crabbit Heads (stuffed haddock heads).

Salmon.

Scallops.

Haggis.

Poor man o' mutton,

and a variety of other things, the chief sweet being

Strawberries and cream, in soup plates.

Among the company were Sheriff and Mrs. Gordon, Peter Fraser, celebrated for his wit and

<sup>1</sup> Author of "Legal Lyrics," editor of the "Glasgow Herald," &c.

## A SCOTCH DINNER

humour, Professor Simpson, James Ballantine, Sir Adam Fergusson, who was warned by his wife to be sure to come home at nine o'clock, which he entirely failed to do. Sheriff Bell of Glasgow, who wrote the beautiful poem on Mary Queen of Scots, was another guest.

When the feast was over Peter Fraser was called on to favour the company with a song, so he launched forth in his serio-comic style and charming voice with "The Annuity," written by George Outram. This being received with great applause, my father rose and asked for "The auld wife's answer" to "The Annuity." This was the surprise awaiting the company in general, and the chief guest in particular, for no one had ever heard of the Annuitant's reply before. My mother now sang "The auld wife's answer" with great effect, to the delight of the enthusiastic audience. This was another of the little conspiracies got up between my father and mother, *he* having written the words, and she singing them. After this my sister Amelia—the Tuckie of the nursery and barely out of it yet—sang with melting pathos—

Jenny, poor Jenny, the fluir o' the lea,  
So winsome, so handsome, so gentle and free;  
It had just been arranged that her state should be  
changed.

When she died, &c., &c., &c.

The rest is lost in the mists of half a century.

This was followed by "Ilka blade o' grass keeps its ain drap o' dew" by the composer, James Ballantine. He in common with my father and Sir Adam Fergusson had been a friend of Sir Walter Scott.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Before me lies a description of another dinner party given by my mother at a later period. The letter is written by Nina (Mrs. Fred Lehmann) to one of her sisters:--

"Mamma gave a dinner the other day of fourteen which was a brilliant success with the exception of one little *contretemps*, which was decidedly Chamberese.

"Mamma, it seems, whispered to the waiter (after the ices) to hand round the brandy, which was in a liqueur bottle. The waiter did so, but finding another bottle of something brown in the sideboard handed it round also as Curacoa. Most people preferred this and took it. In due course it came round to mamma. She pinched the waiter violently and said in an agonized voice, 'Good God! That's Janet's medicine!' (I wonder who the waiter thought Janet was.) It was labelled 'a teaspoonful to be taken before breakfast, Miss Chambers 2089. Prescriptions carefully attended to,' &c., &c.

"Mamma saw at that very moment a gentleman raise his glass and drink the whole of Janet's mixture at a gulp. He said nothing, and mamma has as yet heard of no deaths. Of course she never 'let on,' but what her victims think of her Curacoa is a mystery which may never be discovered."

Our musical evenings were especially delightful, one in particular being impressed on my mind as very brilliant. Sir Robert and Lady Arbuthnot with a daughter had arrived from India, and on this occasion Lady Arbuthnot and my mother enchanted everyone with duets on the harp. It was a pretty and very rare sight to see two graceful



## MONCKTON MILNES

women sitting at their harps playing together magnificently.

Mr. Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton, and styled by Sydney Smith "The Cool of the Evening") would sometimes drop in casually and begin singing "The beating of our own hearts" to his own accompaniment on our old nursery piano. But when he heard Tuckie sing it to her own arrangement on the Erard, that was a different story! The words were his, but the arrangement Tuckie's, and a perfect combination. The lovely compositions of Tuckie are now well known in the musical world under the initials A. L.<sup>1</sup>

Before this musical child was sent to school in Germany she used to enchant her father with her own rendering of

"My heart's in the Highlands a chasing the deer."

Soon after her arrival at school she wrote him the following letter in verse, to the tune of "My heart's," &c. :—

My heart's in 1, Doune Terrace,  
Oh, my heart it is not here,  
My heart's in 1, Doune Terrace,  
Where all to me is dear,  
Where all to me is doubly dear,  
That happens in that row,  
Oh, my heart's in 1, Doune Terrace,  
Wherever I may go.

I see from here o'er house and tree,  
Majestic Arthur's Seat,  
Which used to rise above the sea,  
Eight hundred and twenty feet.

---

<sup>1</sup> She married Rudolf Lehmann, brother of Fred Lehmann.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Until one day our minstrels say  
Two maidens tall and neat<sup>1</sup>  
Rode to the top on horseback,  
Which was another *feit* (feet).  
My heart's in 1, Doune Terrace, &c.

I clog along the heavy sands,  
These many-childed sands,  
I see them digging all day long,  
With spades in their little hands,  
The waves they join in chorus  
With that busy hum of life,  
But I am silent only  
In the merry ringing strife.  
My heart's in 1, D. T., &c.

I watch with eager hope the train,  
For the coach I strain my ear,  
But the train it comes and goes again,  
The coach comes but passes here.  
Regretful then I leave the town,  
With a sigh lay down my head,  
With a sob I fold my pillow down,  
With a tear I go to bed.  
My heart's, &c.

Occasionally our evenings would be diversified by the advent of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, who was greatly interested in electro-biology, and enjoyed trying experiments on "the girls." I can now see him casting his spell over one who was extremely susceptible, and making her try to climb up the bell-pull. Another would have her hand transfixed to the wall, unable to free it until he came to her release with a few passes over her head. He and Professor Simpson would sometimes come together, and these were great nights, but nothing to the evenings a few years before when the professor used to try his experiments with chloroform on us girls.

<sup>1</sup> The twins.

## PROFESSOR AYTOUN

He was then just introducing it, and with some of the liquid simply poured on a handkerchief would have half a dozen of us lying about in various stages of sleep. Our mother feared nothing, and was only too delighted to sacrifice, if unavoidable, a daughter or two to science !

This wonderful man was always ready to take part in any amusements that were going on, and was celebrated for his open house and general hospitality. On one occasion he was greatly struck by some private theatricals that took place at my father's house, and insisted on engaging the company for a repetition at his own house later on.

It was entirely due to the energy of Miss Olivia Sinclair (daughter of Sir George and Lady Camilla Sinclair) that we ventured to expand into private theatricals, as it was quite an innovation for "auld reekie" at that time.

We began with a few *tableaux* arranged by Noel Paton, and then plunged into "Blue Beard." I was Fatima, and appeared in a superb oriental costume picked up at a sale by my mother. Olivia Sinclair was Sister Anne, and Professor Aytoun, Blue Beard. While *we* had to learn every word by heart—all being in rhyme—Mr. Aytoun insisted on leaving his part to the inspiration of the moment. As a heaven-born poet this was no difficulty to him, and truly he never seemed at a loss for a moment, but wove his part in with the others without the slightest mistake or hesitation. I can only remember two lines of what he said, as it nearly upset my gravity at the moment. We were on the stage together when it fell to him to make a fresh start, so

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

looking me keenly in the face, and as if he were not taking time to think at all, he burst out with, "Fatima, my love, you're looking thin, methinks you have a dimple in your chin!" which I had.

When the two nights came off at Dr. Simpson's<sup>1</sup> we had in addition to "Blue Beard," "The Babes in the Wood." The babes were the great doctor himself and Dr. Lyon Playfair.<sup>2</sup> They were dressed in white muslins with short sleeves tied up with blue ribbons, and sucked oranges as they wandered aimlessly through the wood. They did not say much, but looked everything, and fairly brought down the house.

The Prologue and Epilogue were written by friends, and as I happen to have copies by me they can be reproduced here, half a century later.

### PROLOGUE.

BY

MR. ALEXANDER SMITH,

Author of "The Drama of Life," &c.

The curtain rises on our mimic scenes.  
Pale Flora, watching o'er the Prince, forlorn:  
Ruth, standing like a poppy 'mong the corn;  
And Mary, saddest, fairest of the queens,  
Bending in tumbled and dishevelled grief  
Above melodious Rizzio, stabbed and torn:  
Frail Lucy, shrinking 'neath her lover's scorn,  
With faith as worthless as a withered leaf  
That o'er the waste by ev'ry wind is wheeled.  
—Another curtain, o'er a stage of gloom,<sup>3</sup>  
Is slowly rising: calm and pale with hate,  
Two foes are closing in the tug of doom.  
Upon *this* stage shall rise our mimic state,  
But on *that* other stands or falls the world.

---

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir James.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Playfair of St. Andrews.

<sup>3</sup> The Crimean war.



# TABLEAUX

## EPILOGUE.

BY

SYDNEY YENDYS (MR. DOBELL),

Author of "The Roman," "Balder," &c.

Our shows are ended. All the pictures rare  
That filled the bright eyes of this brilliant crowd,  
Dissolved, like those strange landscapes of the air  
Which sunset paints upon a coloured cloud.  
Yet, gentle friends, I would not have you deem  
You saw but fabrics of a faithless dream.  
In changing form, but in unchanging youth,  
*Truth* is eternal. And we showed you *Truth*!

The trembling suppliant minstrel clings no more  
To the fair hand; the husband's wrath is o'er,  
And all the fatal hour. But Love, and Hate,  
Hope, Fear, and Pity, are not out of date!  
Treason and Murder, as of old, will pass  
Thro' to-night's shades; Suspicion's baleful breath  
Is poison still; and Loveliness, alas!  
Still lights the unlovely Dark of Horror, Sin, and Death.

No more our Chieftain's daughter bends above  
Her sleeping Prince; but still, while Love is Love,  
By sorrow's sleep such loyal truth shall kneel!  
No lot so lowly but a heart as leal  
As knelt beside the monarch's slumbering head,  
May watch the humble door, and guard the peasant's bed,

Malcolm no more salutes his beaming Queen;  
Their thrones are empty as this vacant scene.  
But, on a nobler stage, on a loftier seat,  
Beauty still holds her Empery o'er Mankind.  
Power sinks subdued at Virtue's sovereign feet,  
And Mortal *Might* bends low before the immortal *Mind*!

But not alone our pictures have displayed  
The stuff whereof each changing age is made;  
We point the moral of the Moment! Age!  
We paint the portrait of the year and day!  
Fancy transports you to another clime,  
And thinks she sees a mirror of the time;  
From sky to sky one rising curtain furled,  
Our Actors Nations, and our Stage the World.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Look on our bridal contract! and behold  
Far East, another freedom bought and sold,  
As foul a treaty and as dire a wrong,  
Forced on the feeble by the guilty strong!

See our poor murdered babes, and understand  
What the weak suffer at a tyrant's hand!

And in the Saxon Mound and Celtic King  
Behold the wedded nations that shall fling  
The despot deep in his Siberian tide  
Of molten snows; and while his howling pride  
Sinks in the floods, from the calm Ararat  
Of Freedom view the sanguine deluge cease.  
With upturned eyes receive descending Fate,  
And lift with mutual hands the open book of Peace.

When this celebrated and most successful performance came to an end it was curious to find how some of the girls had disappeared in the general *débâcle* just at the moment they were wanted to drive home with papa and mamma. There were so many of us girls (eight from beginning to end) that when a few got lost, it made too little impression to be noticed. Consequently the stragglers were left to find their own way home, which was not far off. This simple arrangement, however, turned out to be big with destiny for me, for it was on that night I plighted my troth to the lover of my life. We were only too well aware that the course of our true love would not run smooth, for we were too young, and for all the luxury of surroundings, too moneyless, to see our way through the veil of the future. Dr. Priestley was at that time Professor Simpson's assistant, and before I ever saw him his fame at the University had reached me as the Senate gold medal man of his year. How little did he think on receiving the highest honour the University could

## DR. PRIESTLEY

confer on a medical student, that in future years he would be invited to represent that University in Parliament !

But to return to the fateful evening : here we were wandering up and down the dark and silent street considering with deep anxiety the possibilities of the future. Not three hours before I had been Ruth in the Harvest Field before a multitude of people, and now I was saying in my heart to the one and only individual in the world to me at that moment, " Whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people." Ruth's beautiful words fulfilled the sum total of all I desired. The world was before us, and we in common with other common mortals could surely go forth like Ruth, to find a field in which to glean !

In the midst of our confidences we felt certain that someone was watching us as we meandered to and fro, for across in the shadow a figure was always haunting us.

We parted on the doorstep, and I entered with a pass-key, feeling deeply agitated when *the figure* slid out of the dining-room and, seizing my hands with both of his, said, " I congratulate you, dear child, with all my heart ! " It was Lyon Playfair, the Babe of the Wood !

He happened to be a guest in my father's house at this time, so there was no shaking him off, but I did not forgive him till years later, when we could afford to laugh over the incident together.

I was only seventeen and my lover twenty-five when the proverbial stern parent had to be inter-

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

viewed. Our case was so different to that of my eldest sister, who by this time had married Fred Lehmann, a man of great accomplishments and definite prospects. But still it was through this channel the intimacy came about. My sister a few months previously had travelled from England to Edinburgh to place herself in the hands of Professor Simpson for medical treatment, when *en route* a young man stepped into the carriage and managed to make a place for himself by a little re-arrangement of her many packages and pets. This led to the usual interchange of courtesies between fellow-passengers who are civil to each other. He lent assistance to her and her maid at the terminus, and they parted in a friendly way without knowing anything of one another, or dreaming that they would ever meet again.

A few days later my sister was perilously ill in the lodgings she had taken to be near the professor, and notwithstanding urgent messages the professor never came. At last, when every one was feeling desperate, the door opened, and who should walk calmly into the room but the agreeable *compagnon de voyage*! In an access of shyness the patient slipped her head under the bedclothes, which the grave young doctor thought somewhat unusual, but on persuading her to emerge was surprised to find the lady of the railway-carriage! Thus began a lifelong affection between them, to be followed by god-parental duties towards each other's children, the cousins of the future.

Meanwhile the stern parent proved true to himself, being reasonable, and always charming.

## LORD WELLWOOD

He was pleased to find that the young "assistant" stood exceptionally high as a "student," having taken not only the Senate medal, but Simpson's gold medal, and Balfour's prize for botany, a subject in which he excelled. His thesis on the fasciæ of the human pelvis and the model which accompanied it had raised him into the front ranks, and secured for him a lasting reputation. The model is now in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Some of his specimens of British sedges are framed and hung on the walls of the Botanical Museum, Edinburgh, while his complete collection was presented to the Linnæan Society, when he was made a Fellow. I have only recently found a bundle of old letters in one of the nooks of my library showing the high estimation in which he was held by Professor Balfour when only twenty-one years of age. He had read a paper on the *Carice Cœderi* and other sedges at the Botanical Society, which had evidently established him as an authority, for there lies a treasured little letter from his professor, enclosing a withered specimen, asking if he considered it the true *C. Cœderi*. Through this precious bundle I find he counted among his botanical friends at this period John McLaren, afterwards Lord McLaren.

I have also several undated letters from Lord Wellwood expressing great regard and gratitude for attention to his daughter on her death-bed. Lord Wellwood was a friend of Sir Walter Scott, and was the man who proposed his health as "The Great Unknown" at the celebrated dinner where the secret was divulged, and the authorship of the



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Waverley novels was acknowledged for the first time.

It is also curious to know that at this early period of Dr. Priestley's professional career he had frequently to go to Whittinghame to attend the mother of our present Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour. At the end of his professional career, when he had become M.P. for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, we were invited to a garden-party at Whittinghame, when my husband greatly amused the Rt. Honourable gentleman by telling him some curious recollections of his people. But to go back to the time of our betrothal, all was quietly and amicably settled. He was to go steadily on with his work with Professor Simpson, while I continued to be happy and to enjoy the life at home. In two years the term of his apprenticeship would be over, and then we hoped to begin professional life together.

Looking back across the years that have since intervened, I can see myself at that period anxiously trying to qualify myself to be the wife of a poor man. I began to make my own clothes, trim my bonnets, and even re-cover my white satin shoes! Strict economy was the order of the day, and the things I never thought of before I thought of now. I persuaded my mother to hand over the house-keeping to me, and for two years there was a *régime* of comfort, tempered with economy, never before known in that hospitable house.



## CHAPTER V

DURING this time of probation I always found a welcome at 52, Queen Street, where Dr. and Mrs. Simpson received me as a daughter of their own. They always kept open house at luncheon time, and generally the table was full and the room crowded. The professor never allowed wine, beer, or spirits to be on the table, as he was, more or less, teetotalist, but his coffee was celebrated.

On one occasion when I was present he had just arrived from one of his antiquarian expeditions, and we sat down to lunch quite a small family party. Innumerable patients were meanwhile collecting in the many consulting rooms at the back of the house, and just as he was rushing off to see them his old butler, who had been unpacking his things, came up confidentially and said, "Doctor, you have left all your flannel vests behind!" "Ah! Oh!" replied the doctor, feeling himself all over, "I've got them all on!"

He was extremely vague about personal matters, money matters, and time. For the latter he showed not the smallest respect, and many are the stories told of consequences. But notwithstanding all delinquencies he was greatly beloved by his patients.

When I was talking to Professor Pillans one day he gave me an interesting account of his own instru-

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

mentality in determining Simpson to study medicine. It seems that the Stuart bursary was going a-begging for want of a candidate of that name coming forward. Failing the name of Stuart, the next name on the list was Simpson. Still no one coming forward of that name, Professor Pillans took James Simpson aside and persuaded him to apply as a candidate, and no opponents appearing on the field he carried it, and gained the purse of ten or twelve pounds. This proved to be the turning-point in his life, as he was encouraged to study medicine from that time. Some years later, in 1847, when he had just been elected to the Chair of Gynæcology, he met his old friend Pillans, who congratulated him on his recent election and simultaneous marriage. Professor Simpson then told him that he had to thank him a great deal for his election to the Chair, upon which Professor Pillans expressed surprise, as he had not moved in the matter. Simpson then told him that but for the bursary he would undoubtedly have gone back to *bake baps with his father in Bathgate*, whereas it had inspired him to pursue study, and he had chosen there and then the medical profession. While canvassing for his election he was surprised into matrimony from the fear of losing a certain number of votes on the ground that he was not a married man. "Will you give me your vote if I am married?" said he to one of the electors. "Yes," was the reply, so off he started that night for Liverpool, plunged headlong into the peaceful abode of his cousins, sent them all crazy, had no time to waste in considerations or thought to give to settlements, but carried off his wife by capture next day,

## CHLOROFORM

then proceeded to gather up the threatened votes, and came out of it all triumphantly. It is only fair to say he had been engaged to his cousin, Miss Grindlay, for some time, and that they were only waiting for fortunes to mend.

Many are the stories told of his introduction of chloroform, when he and his assistants would be found at midnight lying unconscious under the dining-room table by the butler. At the time when it came into use it was not hailed with any joy on the part of the Scottish clergy, who considered it a contravention of God's decree that in *sorrow* women were to bring forth children in consequence of Eve's fall. The professor met this by pointing out Scriptural authority for sleep when the first woman was created. The Almighty did not put Adam to the pain of having his rib taken out while conscious, but first caused a deep sleep to fall upon him. "Then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof." This explanation proving satisfactory, no further objection was ever raised.

Meanwhile, owing to the overwhelming work going on at 52, Queen Street, my betrothed could spare but little time for the attentions and graces expected of him at 1, Doune Terrace. When the summer came round I went forth with my twin sister to pay a few visits in the Highlands. There was no railway in these days further than Perth, so to get to Coull, near Strathpeffer, we had to go by a wretched boat to Invergordon, then drive across country in carriages sent to meet us. After a tedious journey we were warmly welcomed by our four hostesses, Mrs. Douglas and her three daughters. They each led a

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

separate and independent existence, having each their own fortunes, apartments, and maids. They were all extremely intellectual and much given to politics, the latter keeping the table lively when we assembled for meals. We never could understand how we came to be there, we felt so little intellectual and so extremely unpolitical. The name of Napoleon seemed to act as the trumpet blast for a general engagement, and why that unfortunate gentleman should be such a red flag to them we could not tell in those days of our glorious ignorance. However, politics apart, we also were free to lead our own lives, and when they had all disappeared into their various haunts we would hie off to the moors with the keeper whose sole business was to provide the house with game. This had the effect of making us hungry out of all proportion to the refinement of our surroundings. The four hostesses were far too intellectual to have appetites ; but nothing daunted, we got hold of the housekeeper, and for ever after enjoyed the delight of having a brown loaf placed in front of one, and a white loaf in front of the other without fail for breakfast and lunch. The four ladies were too indulgent to feel anything but amusement at this and at all our other little liberties.

Sometimes we were carried off in state to luncheon parties at Braun Castle, Catswell, and other country houses in the neighbourhood, all of which entertainments we greatly enjoyed.

At the present time only one of our hostesses survives, Mrs. Douglas Bayley, who still remains one of my dearest friends. When we meet it is always with the joy of youth from the old association of ideas.



## THE BARREL ORGAN

On leaving Coull we had to drive back to Invergordon and take the horrible boat to Macduff, in Banffshire. There a carriage met us and drove us to Eden, where we met with a warm reception from Mr. and Mrs. Grant Duff (the parents of the Right Hon. Sir Mountstuart). By the time we arrived the dinner hour was approaching, and we were told there was no possibility of our luggage coming till later. Not in the least disconcerted, we assured them we should enjoy dinner just as much in our travelling clothes, for after recent experiences we were famishing.

Our dear hostess was delighted with this, and greatly amused after dinner when we two shabby girls danced "the barrel organ" in the midst of the gay throng. We were supposed to be a couple of wooden figures trying to clasp each other round the waist, but not quite succeeding, as we went stiffly round to the music of the organ. The dance music we managed with great effect from the laryngeal organs within our own throats, giving rise to a shrill shriek now and then, a bronchial wheeze sometimes, and at all times fearfully in and out of tune. Garcia, the greatest singing-master of the day, being present, was immensely amused, and afterwards congratulated us on our excellent ears!<sup>1</sup>

A delightful vision of Mrs. Grant Duff appears before me now as she used to sit in her own corner, a picture of geniality wrapped in several scarves. These she would drop off or draw on as required. Most of the scarves were Indian, relics of the days when her husband was Resident at Sattara.

<sup>1</sup> Garcia has now entered his hundredth year.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Alice, the only daughter, was a gay, sprightly girl, very highly accomplished, and at that time receiving singing lessons from Garcia.

When the weather was dull we used to go fishing with Ainslie Grant Duff, the elder son being far too scholarly even in these days to care about sport. However, the father made up for the son's deficiencies by taking us out to the shooting-ground—which he had carefully prepared—to teach us how to shoot with the Swiss rifle. When he considered we were sufficiently expert with this, the next step was rabbit-shooting with gun, keepers, and dogs. Luckily, nothing went wrong on these occasions, but the following year when Tuckie was put through the drill, and taken into the woods for a shoot, she was told that when she heard the word “rabbit” called out she must look sharp, and be ready to fire. Presently the word “rabbit” rang out, and Tuckie, in a great terror, cocked her gun, *turned away her head*, and fired point-blank in among the beaters! Fortunately, no one was hurt, but the pride of the old gentleman, who had hoped for better things, was severely wounded. There was no more shooting for that young lady.

Another form of amusement was picnicking on various parts of the coast. Mrs. Grant Duff had her own particular carriage, or rather equipage, the horses being driven by a postillion in the good old-fashioned style. It was always considered a great honour to be invited to join her, but unfortunately she could never get any of us young ones to accept, as we all preferred what we were pleased to call the *bad behaviour carriages!*

## MR. GRANT DUFF

Mr. Grant Duff *père* was a most courteous and delightful old gentleman, and took such a deep interest in my *fiancé* that he always inquired after the post came in if I had had a letter from my lover. Alas, the letters were so extremely rare from that busy quarter, that I began to feel rather ashamed, and at last adopted the convenient plan of writing my own love-letters and sending them to Dr. Priestley to post. After this I was no longer afraid to meet the inquiry, but taking the dear old gentleman aside, would read him the most charming passages. This plan proved very satisfactory to all, and caused not a little amusement when the device was disclosed.

After we had spent several weeks at Eden our father joined us, and then geological excursions were the order of the day, when Mountstuart Grant Duff, Garcia, Mr. H. Somers Maine,<sup>1</sup> and all the learned ones were glad to take the more serious part in the fun.

After spending an ideal month at Eden my father accompanied us to Fyvie Castle, in Aberdeenshire, to visit Colonel and Mrs. Gordon.<sup>2</sup> Here a new set of ideas occupied our minds, for the castle, one of the most perfect in Scotland, was haunted by a ghost. My twin and I indulged the hope of seeing the ghost, as our bedroom was in the ghostly quarter, but to the great disappointment of ourselves, and considerable annoyance of our father—who was

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir Henry.

<sup>2</sup> This castle was built by Alexander Earl of Dunfermline, Chancellor of Scotland, who also built Pinkie in the sixteenth century.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

curious about ghosts—we could never keep awake at the critical time. So the ghost was entirely lost upon us !

One morning our host and hostess took us up to the garret to see the weeping stone, which for centuries had wept in bad weather, and dried its tears in fine. The garret in itself was worth inspection, for it was a vast wilderness, full of curious old travelling-boxes and quaint things of long ago. There was a terrible legend to the effect that the Ladies of Fyvie would never thrive.

A couple of years later these dear friends were among the most intimate of my early married life. Our simple beginnings were a source of great interest to them. They would occasionally drop in to lunch on Sundays, and knew that on all days there was a cordial welcome for them.

## CHAPTER VI

At last the happy day, April 17th, 1856, arrived when we were permitted to go forth together to prepare a corner in the world for ourselves. The present was somewhat nebulous, but so were the constellations at one period of their brilliant existence! *My* 'point d'appui' was the home. *His* success in the work he had before him, and for which he had been so well prepared.

Marriages in Scotland were usually performed at home in those days, so Bishop Terrot of St. Paul's came with his clerk bearing the register, and robed himself in some spare corner of the house.

Great was the assemblage of relatives and friends collected from the highways and byways of literature, science, and art, when the bridal procession appeared descending the staircase towards the drawing-room door.

Ah! how well I can see it now passing as a vision "glittering through a dream of things that were." There is the bride arrayed in white silk (full evening dress), carrying a bouquet presented by Jenny Lind (she and Otto Goldschmidt being among the guests). As she walks slowly up the avenue of friends leaning on her father's arm she is followed by eight bridesmaids to the altar.

The altar! Well, this was one of these now extinct



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

sofas for two with raised ends and a little rail between. In front of this we knelt while the bishop officiated across the rail. The ceremony was simple, if not primitive, but served to bind us just as fast as would the full service in any more sacred temple, the legal bond being centred in the signing of the register before witnesses.

After many little jokes on the part of the bishop as to "Priestley influence," &c., we adjourned to the dining-room for the breakfast, the good old wedding breakfast, speeches and all. While this was going on within, the customary crowd was gathering outside under the windows, keeping up the cry of "poor oot" (pour out), which was duly responded to by a shower of small coin on the departure of the couple.

At length we were in the train hurrying away from all we knew into the great unknown. On crossing the Tweed I wafted a kiss across the waters to that "Land of my home, my father's land, land where my soul was nourished," and in which I had lived such a happy girlhood.

I suppose it was because we were so innocent of all worldly affairs that we never felt oppressed with the sense of poverty. My husband had saved something out of his salary while with the professor, and had just received £50 for his share in editing Simpson's works, recently published. That formed our ready cash, and our sole capital was £1000 promised by my father to start us in life. So altogether we were very happy, and felt quite rich, although we fully realized the need to be careful. In the course of a few days we found ourselves in Paris,



## OUR HONEYMOON

having travelled by the cheapest route. To my husband all arrangements concerning the journey had been cheerfully confided. We did not aspire to the luxury of expensive hotels, but there were little hotels of modest pretensions, and plenty of *pensions* where no doubt we could be comfortably housed.

As we drove from the Gare du Nord through the well-lit streets, and passed the Palace of the Tuileries in the height of its glory, my mind was running riot over French history, and full of the magnificence, the romance, the gaiety of the French capital, when I began to realize that we were getting into a somewhat dingy quarter. "Ah! there is the École de Médecine," exclaimed my husband gaily; and presently we drew up at a dark doorway where an appalling woman gave us the most profuse greeting *si bien content* was she to receive madame!

Yes, she would lead the way if madame would follow, and away we went circulating apparently round a pole till we came breathlessly to the top. Here she threw open a door, and with all the pride in the world ushered me into the rooms once occupied by monsieur when a medical student!

"Ah, how interesting!" I managed faintly to exclaim.

Having shown me in, she disappeared into the darkness, leaving me with one miserable light and a thousand honeyed words upon her lips.

Looking round the dilapidated *appartement*, my heart sank, but quickly rose up again as my youthful spouse burst into the room full of joy and delightful associations. "Look, dear, I used to sit

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

with my microscope here, and with my little bits of dissections there, for I was studying the pathology of intra . . . ." (something I could not understand), "and thinking of writing my thesis on the fasciæ of the something else. But now this is to be a grand holiday, and how we shall enjoy it!"

How was it possible in the face of such serenity, such perfect satisfaction, to feel the pang of humiliation stealing over me without making a struggle to rise above it? Was I coldly to disenchant him, and point out the unsuitability of students' quarters for married life? No. The solemn words came back to me "for better, for worse."

Again, had I not been qualifying myself for the last two years to be the wife of a poor man? Yes, this was the first little sacrifice of the many I had been warned to expect, and at the very thought of "sacrifice" my spirit rose joyfully up to meet it. Besides, I was not alone, and never throughout my life was left alone where a matter of self-denial or sacrifice was necessary.

Next morning youth again asserted itself (I was only twenty the day I was married), and throwing open the window to look out on the fair Paris of my imagination, I beheld nothing but a wilderness of grim chimney-pots with a distant dome here and there. The atmosphere, however, was clear, there was plenty of sky. This was good for the microscope no doubt, but not lively in other respects.

In the midst of these terrible surroundings I always managed to find a truly feminine consolation in my trousseau. I was going to say wardrobe, but that would imply what did not exist, the nearest

## PARIS

approach being a row of doubtful hat-pegs. But on these pegs hung the lovely things which seemed sent by Providence to relieve the general gloom. In the depths of my travelling-trunk with the gloss of newness on it I would come on many little dainty gifts that would raise sweet visions before my mind. Yes, there was the handkerchief that carried me back to Coul, where I used to watch Cecilia Douglas embroidering it for my *petit cadeau*; and there were the pearls from the sweet Conan river, mounted on a ring and sent as a wedding gift from Mrs. Douglas; and many other little souvenirs were there to send me off mentally on pleasure excursions from the Highlands to the Lowlands, and from England into France. No, I could not gloom.

Carefully and quietly adorned, we started off to see Paris and seek our *déjeuner* in one of the many restaurants; students' quarters not yielding much beyond *café au lait* and *petit pain*. After an excellent breakfast at the large cost of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  francs each, my husband was bent on going to see a fellow-student who had been desperately ill with erysipelas, contracted, no doubt, in the hospital of the period. As we walked along we met Dr. Campbell, the distinguished physician who had attended the Empress Eugenie when her son was born. There was a cordial greeting between master and pupil, and I was introduced to this friend, who remained a friend till the end of his life. At last we came to another dreary doorway, and there I was left till my husband went up first to feel his way. Presently he returned to take me up to see "poor Tom Smith." This pale friend, who had lost all his hair during his illness, gave

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

us a cordial reception, but his fine intellectual face betrayed the storm he had passed through. This was my first introduction to my still esteemed friend, now Sir Thomas Smith, Bart., surgeon, who in the year of grace 1902 was called in consultation to the bedside of King Edward VII., to assist in determining and deciding which it was to be—a coronation or an operation!

Our next visit was to relations, M. et Madame Charles Priestley, who lived in a large *étage* in a house built round a courtyard. I was now launched into a new family life, and was introduced to Madame Charles Priestley's brother, M. Chaplin, and his wife. He was a distinguished artist and very popular in society. They also had a charming and artistic *étage*. The two families combined to make things pleasant for us, and showed us all the attention we desired. One day two tickets for the theatre arrived, and I adorned myself with great delight in a dress I considered admirably suited to the occasion. After various little difficulties concerning the toilette were safely accomplished, we reached the theatre, but instead of passing to our seats quietly and unnoticed, as usual in our own country, my appearance in a low evening dress and opera cloak seemed to astonish the French, who were not accustomed to anything so gorgeous at a theatre! I shrank under their gaze, and much resented all the bonneted women around me. However, things settled down when Monsieur Chaplin came to take care of us. In future I would know better how to dress for a Parisian theatre, which to me looked dirty, felt airless, and the people *pas distingués*. There is a pathetic interest in



## MADAME CHARLES PRIESTLEY

looking back to those days when family life was still unbroken. Now Madame Charles Priestley lives alone, all her children being scattered save the one daughter Caroline, Madame le Grand, who lives in the next "Hotel" to her, the two hotels having a united garden in the Avenue Gourgaud. In that pretty bit of Paris we still occasionally fraternize, and although many of the links have gone, the family interest remains unbroken.

Our holiday having come to an end, we took leave of Paris and the friends who had been so kind to us, and hastened on to London. There in our new home we were joyously received by my twin sister Janet, my father's sister, Mrs. Wills—also called Janet—and her husband, Harry Wills, so well known in the literary world as Charles Dickens' partner and assistant editor of "Household Words."



## CHAPTER VII

OUR three weeks of honeymoon having now come to an end, we had to face the great experiment of the age, or of any age, that of getting on, breaking new ground, finding our feet in a new world. Our assets were that snug little thousand pounds lying at my father's bank, waiting to be drawn as required.

My husband's father could afford nothing in specie, as he had lost an ample fortune during some financial crisis in America, but of genial kindness there was an inexhaustible supply.

As a professional start Dr. Priestley had won the appointment of physician to the St. George's and St. James' Dispensary for women and children at the back of Regent Street. He had come to London a month before the marriage to contest the election against a doctor long resident and of good standing in Wimpole Street, and had gained it. The salary was *nil*, but the appointment was an asset all the same.

During that time he had also, with the assistance of friends, fixed on a residence. It could scarcely be called "taking a house," but it was to look as if a house had been taken, therefore a resplendent brass plate adorned the door. By looking up at the corner of the street the passer-by could, with-

## OUR NEW HOME

out much difficulty, discern that it was called Somerset Street, and as Portman Square was not far off, our address burst upon the world as—

16, Somerset Street,  
Portman Square.

Inside No. 16 Mr. and Mrs. James Mills undertook to let three rooms on the ground floor and three rooms in the attic, all furnished, to Dr. Priestley for the sum of £160 a year. For this sum Mr. Mills was to provide kitchen fire, attendance, cooking, plate and linen, china and glass. He was also to pay for the washing of the linen supplied, and to black boots and clean clothes.

Looking at the contract just now, as I write, it strikes me that Mr. and Mrs. James Mills could not have made much out of the agreement, but to their honour they did everything in their power to make life easy for us. He had been a butler in a high-class family, and she a high-class cook in a good family. As a manager, no less than as a cook, she was admirable, and established for me a standard for the rest of my life.

Hence all was ready for a beginning. There was the beautiful door with the imposing porch, ready to be opened by the still more imposing butler. What more could a fastidious public desire, and why did not the public at once see it? As time went on we began to get uneasy. We had determined to limit our expenses to £400 a year, but what after that? Meanwhile there was abundance of time for the M.D. to write articles for "All the Year Round," and to read; and as the busy student

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

had always regretted his enforced neglect of the more general education, he plunged into Macaulay's "History of England," and other historical works. The social element still prevailed, and in our own appointed little place in nature that was a liberal education in itself.

The first evening party to which we were invited was one, the night after our arrival, given by Dr. and Mrs. Carpenter, who were then in residence at University Hall, Gordon Square. In the first room we entered, on the ground floor, there hung an oil painting of Dr. Joseph Priestley, among many other pictures of celebrated people. This was my first introduction to the discoverer of oxygen, who was a great-grand-uncle of my husband.

Upstairs we met with a warm reception as "the newly-married couple." Although the rooms were crammed with dungeons of learning and *savants* of every kind, I was struck with the gaiety and responsiveness of the company, who seemed all rushing about, eager to find the people they wished to talk to. The Wills' and my twin were there, and together the twins, as twins, afforded the philosophers a good deal of amusement from the extraordinary resemblance of one to the other, and the inevitable mistakes that followed. In the midst of the whirl a lady rushed up to my husband, exclaiming, "Dear Cousin William, I am so delighted to see you again ; introduce me to your wife immediately." This was Bessie Parkes, one of the most charming writers and advanced women of her day, advanced in the best sense. Her father was a well-known man in London society, Joseph Parkes, the taxing-

## ROBERT STEPHENSON

master in Chancery. Her mother was a Priestley, lineally descended from Joseph Priestley, being a grand-daughter of that celebrated man, at whose death and funeral she was present, when eight years of age. She and my husband sprang from one common ancestor in the previous generation.

In the course of a few weeks another appointment fell to our lot, that of lecturer at the Grosvenor Place School of Medicine. It was under St. George's Hospital, but has since been swept away to make room for the extension of the hospital.

We began now to be quite hopeful, as this would bring the young lecturer within the notice of some of the older men, and in some degree test his capabilities.

Life in the meantime was being made very pleasant to us through the affection of the Wills' and the kindness of friends. Robert Stephenson, the great engineer, and son of the founder of railway engines, gave us a standing invitation for Sunday luncheons. At his house, 34, Gloucester Square, we met many interesting people, and it is curious to remember that in a discussion about the state of the Thames he explained that if *quay walls*<sup>1</sup> were built along both sides of the river it would increase the depth, as well as the flow of the river, and be of immense commercial value and benefit in every way. With our proverbial slowness we have got the length of a bit of embankment, and the authorities are only now awakening to the fact that the want of quay walls is losing us much of the world's commerce, as the big ships cannot come up through

<sup>1</sup> His own expression.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

the shallows, and even the great P. and O.'s are threatening to leave Tilbury and go elsewhere. At the time we were living at Chalcots he discovered that some of us had never been to an opera, so he and my mother fixed a night when we were all to dine with him and go to Covent Garden afterwards. He had secured a large box on the first tier, and it turned out to be one of the brilliant nights with Mario and Grisi in "Norma," and made a great impression.

One day when Robert Stephenson was shown into my father's room he was amused to find the philosopher sitting to the Andalusian Maid for a portrait which she was cutting on a cameo. Greatly struck by her genius, he afterwards sent her a superb cameo brooch of immense size and classical design mounted in gold with pale blue enamel. He was only fifty-six years of age when he died in 1859 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

One of the memorable occasions at this time was a fish dinner at Greenwich given by Thackeray to my father and mother, who were paying us a visit, or rather seemed to be paying us a visit, as they always took the intervening floors of our house on their own account. It was arranged that all the family present in London were to be invited, so in addition to ourselves my twin and Tuckie were included among the guests. Miss Thackeray received us. My twin sat next to Wilkie Collins and had a brilliant time of it. I forget who fell to my share, but it was a great gathering of the writers of the day, and they were all at their best.

During this our first winter of married life, 1857, on January 6th, Charles Dickens gave his celebrated



## CHARLES DICKENS

theatricals at Tavistock House. The play-bill lies before me, and announces :—

AN ENTIRELY NEW  
ROMANTIC DRAMA, IN THREE ACTS,  
BY MR. WILKIE COLLINS, CALLED  
“THE FROZEN DEEP.”

Charles Dickens took the part of Richard Wardour, Mark Lemon Lieut. Crayford, &c.

My aunt, Mrs. Wills, was Nurse Esther, a weird prophetess, and Scotch to the backbone. Her dress and make-up were so characteristic that she was overwhelmed by the eulogy excited. The performance went on for five nights in succession, and each night sixty or seventy stayed to supper, the whole winding up on the last night with a dance on the stage. There never was a more perfect thing than this little drama with its appointments, scenery, and acting all so admirable. Douglas Jerrold remarked to my aunt the last night that it was “too real, too painful, the men were sobbing, and Mark Lemon on the stage was crying every night, although he had seen and played in it so often.”

Among the many relics of Charles Dickens bequeathed to me by Mrs. Wills I have come upon two of the plans of the house written out by Dickens himself, arranging where the guests were to sit. We happened to be there on one of the other nights, and I found myself sitting next M. Van de Weyer, the Belgian minister, who made himself most agreeable.

Another relic of these days is the following letter from Wilkie Collins addressed to Mr. Wills concerning the Woman in White :—

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Church Hill Cottage, Broadstairs.

August 15th, 1859.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I send enclosed (and registered—for I should go distracted if it was lost) my first number. Please let me have duplicate proof as soon as possible, for I want to see something in connection with the story which is not a mass of confusion. It is an awfully long number, between eight or nine pages, but I must stagger the public into attention, if possible, at the outset. They shan't drop a number when I begin, if *I* can help it.

I have hit on a new title, in the course of a night walk to the North Foreland, which seems to me weird and striking—

THE WOMAN IN WHITE,  
valuable in this view—let us keep it.

My love to Dickens. How does he do? When will he write? Did he get my letter?

Have you got a house to let? I am at mortal enmity with my London landlord, and am resolved to leave him. Where am I to go next? "God He knows."

Ta-ta.

W. C.

A few months later when "The Woman in White" was creating a great sensation my twin wrote to Wilkie Collins saying she could not wait any longer, and must know the fate of Laura, &c. The following was the reply she received:—

12, Harley Street, W. May 15th, 1860.

I beg to assure Miss Chambers, solemnly, that nobody about whom she is interested and over whom

## A MEMORABLE DINNER

the undersigned can exercise benevolent control shall come to any harm. If she will look at the number published to-morrow she will see that Laura is *not* murdered, and in another week she will know that Anne Catherick *is* caught. In the same two numbers Miss Halcombe's whereabouts is satisfactorily ascertained and Miss Halcombe's recovery positively asserted.

If this categorical explanation be only half as acceptable to Miss Chambers as the perusal of Miss Chambers's note was to the lucky individual who has excited her interest in his story, that individual will consider these few lines as the most agreeable literary composition on which he has been engaged for many a long day past.

(Signed) WILKIE COLLINS.

Soon after this she met Wilkie again at Mrs. Fred Lehmann's house at one of her informal dinners. She, Tuckie, and Mrs. Benzon were the only ladies, the gentlemen being Charles Dickens, John Foster, Wilkie and Charlie Collins, Sir Wentworth Dilke, Holman Hunt, Chorley, Uncle Harry, and her father Robert Chambers. In a letter she describes this dinner as brilliant, the conversation never flagged, and some of the stories told were inimitable. She continues, "I sat between Dickens—who took me down—and Charlie Collins, and my affections were quite divided between the two. In the evening Tuckie sang so divinely that Chorley wept, and Charles Dickens went down on his knees to beg for an encore, while others chased her all round the room supplicating and entreating, but in vain."

## CHAPTER VIII

THE time was now approaching for the break up of the summer session of the various medical schools, and we resolved to take a trip to Edinburgh, not only to visit our former homes, but to see the students capped, i.e. take their degrees at the University. The railway journey from London to Edinburgh at that time took twelve hours, and very trying it was. On the capping day we joined the multitude within a few rows of the Senate, where we could witness the ceremony and see our friends the professors. At the close of the proceedings, when the people were leaving, Professor Simpson began beckoning me to go up, and when I managed to answer the summons he took the cap of honour, and thrusting it on the top of my best bonnet, repeated with much gravity the Latin words that convert the medical student into the doctor of medicine. He now called on the secretary to bring a sheet of paper, and wrote on it,—

To constitute

Mrs. Priestley M.D.

Whereupon all the professors signed their names, and congratulated me on being the first lady doctor of the Edinburgh University! The professor, who



## MRS. PRIESTLEY, M.D.

was very fond of fun and liked to do things thoroughly, went off to the registry office, and on looking up old documents found that two king's or queen's physicians had power to confer M.D. degrees, and that this law had never been abrogated. The document in question was not only signed by two queen's physicians, but by the whole of the *Senatus Academicus*, therefore I was legally entitled to practise. This was enough for Dr. Simpson, who during our visit to his house took great delight in addressing me as "*Doctora*," introducing me as a *confrère* to foreign doctors, and in carrying me off in his carriage for consultations where another opinion was required ! Hence I was consulted about several babies, and one case of acu-pressure, which I had never heard of before, and do not understand to this day.

In the natural course of time our first year of married life came to an end, and we could take stock of our possessions and weigh our prospects in the balance.

A few patients had strayed along throughout the year, and we held the two medical appointments. But we were minus the first £400, and plus a baby. To set off against that we opened a little ebony money-box in which I had collected the fees of the year, and found the total amounted to £60. This was considered by a family council to be singular good fortune !

Meanwhile, the world was rolling on much as usual. London I thought by no means beautiful. Hyde Park was a bald, uninteresting wilderness until the mob very kindly took it in hand and pulled down the



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

railings. The great station at Paddington was in progress and the underground railway proceeding. Victoria Station was not built, and the difficulties of traffic were great.

Round the corner from our abode lived Sir John and Lady Kirkland in one of the large houses in Portman Square. The former being related to my mother, they took us by the hand, so to say, and often dropped in to see how we were getting on. Sir John was at that time one of the ushers to the Prince Consort. Our first invitation to one of their big parties was a new experience to me of fashionable London life. On the card was "Small," "*Thé dansant*." When we got there it was immense, and we never saw the tea nor the dancing!

It was about this time we were invited by Mr. Henry Stevens (an American writer) to meet Mrs. Beecher Stowe. The whole world was then in a state of ferment about "Uncle Tom's Cabin," from the Queen on her throne to the slavey in her den.

The rooms were crowded when we arrived, and although we encountered many friends of the literary world, including the Wills', we got no sight of the guest of the evening. At last Mr. Stevens came up to me and said, "Now come and be introduced to Mrs. Beecher Stowe in the next room." I was just then feeling very happy in the midst of other authors, and begged to be let off, adding, "I can never bear to be introduced to lions." Thereupon he vanished and came back presently with Mrs. Beecher Stowe, and bringing her up said, addressing her, "Allow me to introduce you to the lady who does not like being introduced to lions." This broke the ice very

## MISS CATHERINE SINCLAIR

pleasantly, and, subsiding into a chair beside me, we fell into pleasant conversation.

A few years later, when the war between North and South was over and all the slaves emancipated, we met General Grant at the Rt. Hon. Mr. Beresford Hope's.

Among other distinguished Americans to whom we were introduced at this time were Longfellow, the poet, and Lady Franklin, widow of the Arctic explorer.

One day my twin and I were busily engaged in washing and getting up some fine old lace in our little back room, when we were told that Miss Catherine Sinclair and her sister, the Countess of Glasgow, were waiting to see us in the drawing-room. Miss Catherine and my twin were devoted friends, and I may say partners in mission work in Edinburgh. Their mission was giving lectures on health to young women and girls, Miss Catherine providing the funds, and my sister delivering the lectures under the advice and guidance of Dr. Andrew Combe. The Sinclair family we had long known in Edinburgh, and the friendship was now transferred to London and taken up and continued by Lady Glasgow. On one memorable evening at her house an amusing incident occurred through my resemblance to my twin. I was standing near the door, hearing the people announced, when the name of a certain gallant colonel (whom I had never seen before) was called out, a name full of interest for me at the moment, as I knew he was just then very much in love with my twin. I felt his eye upon me, and the next moment he was by my side pouring forth a torrent

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

of delight in finding me there. "When did you come to town?" he exclaimed.

I told him "not very long ago," and presently, in the most matter-of-fact way, asked to be allowed to introduce him to my husband. "Ah!" he said laughing, "you are playing me a little trick; you are *not married!*"

"Oh, yes, I am," I replied.

"Oh, no, you are not," said he.

"Well, just ask Lady Glasgow."

"Where is she? Oh, there is Miss Catherine; I will ask her."

"Yes, she's married," said Miss Catherine.

He was still incredulous, whereupon we both went up to our hostess, who was greatly astonished when I appealed to her in these words: "Am I married or am I not married, Lady Glasgow?" Then, seizing my husband as he was passing along, I begged to present my lawful and irrevocable husband!

When the trick was revealed it was to his infinite satisfaction, and we all had a great deal of fun out of the incident. The next time I met this brilliant soldier was many years later at a dinner party. He had distinguished himself at Tel-el-Kebir and was now a General and a K.C.B., but although we sat next to one another and could allude to previous friendship, neither he nor I could bring ourselves to refer to the girl he had loved and admired, for he knew too well, in the midst of his war-driven life, that she had gone to a premature grave.

But to return to the lace in the little back room. I had been told by Mrs. Procter—wife of Barry Cornwall—that the way to get up point lace was by

## ADELAIDE ANN PROCTER

using the claw of a lobster. This was a great success. Mrs. Procter, who was more intimate with my sister, Mrs. Fred Lehmann, than myself, used frequently to undertake her old lace and get it up beautifully.

Adelaide Ann Procter, her gifted daughter, I sometimes met at the house of Mrs. Parkes, she and Bessie being as sisters, until Adelaide's death parted them. Her poems are among the gems of literature, and curiously enough, without much resemblance to myself, she was considered singularly like my twin. Both being highly intellectual women, they bore the same stamp, and neither lived far into the realms of maturity.

A curious instance of the mistakes which arose from the similarity between my twin and myself happened at the King's Cross railway-station a few weeks after my marriage, when Professor Huxley met my sister going back to Edinburgh.

"What! Mrs. Priestley," he exclaimed. "Going back to your father already?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, unable to resist the fun. "I am tired of matrimony, and going back to my father!"

In these little pranks we were generally found out.

Some two years after this, about 1858 or 1859, my father was advised to send my twin to winter at Cannes on account of her health, which was always delicate, and in a letter to Mrs. Wills she gives the following account of her life:—

"Life continues delightful here. I am every bit as good as a married lady of the nineteenth century,



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

and do all that is proper and right. I read religiously newspapers from Scotland, a whole week old at least, sent by papa in the goodness of his heart, and duly return my calls in Mrs. Woolfield's open carriage, and all goes on with a sort of easy conventionality which is quite charming. I had a very pleasant visit from Lord Brougham the other day. He stayed quite a long time, and went away calling me his 'dear child' and God-blessing me. When he went out at the door he put on his grey wide-awake the back to the front, exhibiting two worsted ends and tassels hanging over his face. Of course, he was oblivious to the fact, and I, feeling it would be wicked to have the street boys laughing at him, called out, 'My lord, you've got your hat on the wrong way.' 'Have I?' said he, in an absent sort of way, 'that's the second time to-day.'

"You will be amused to hear that my friends contribute towards my support—indeed, I am like the man who lived upon samples. There is not a home-fed ham in the neighbourhood that a specimen is not sent in for breakfast, neatly cut and done up with parsley. Then both half and whole pheasants come in, jam, eggs, and even bread. They have all found out my unpractical ways, and consider me a helpless waif lost in lodgings. I have *cartes* on my mantelpiece with the different hours for feeding at the several houses of my friends, who expect me to walk in to any one of them.

"The other day I was sitting on the mountain brow, under a large blue umbrella, reading the last Quarterly and quite absorbed in it, when I suddenly



## PRINCE LEOPOLD

heard a voice call out, 'Oh, here's Miss Chambers; it's Miss Chambers, Dr. Gunther; Dr. Gunther, here's Miss Chambers.' I looked up and saw the little royal boy (Prince Leopold) on his donkey close by, in a state of the most flattering excitement at once more having come upon me. Of course, I advanced and shook hands with him, and was not a little amused when he said he thought if they came up my road they should find me! It was a road I had shown them one day as my own discovery, where they had never been before. I remarked that it was such a steep and dangerous road I wondered they attempted it except on foot. 'Oh, yes,' said the prince, 'and Lady Bowater's saddle came round and down she came!' By this time Lady Bowater and Dr. Gunther were getting nearer, and I went on to inquire into the accident, but found it nothing. The lady was uninjured, and it had done nothing more than give the merry prince a good laugh."

Among the pleasant houses we visited at this period was Mrs. Loudon's, in Porchester Terrace. As girls we were very fond of Agnes, the only child. When she came to stay with us in Scotland we all looked up to her, not only because she was essentially the English girl, but because she was so clever and had classical features. I cannot remember ever having seen Mr. Loudon, neither can I recollect ever having heard anything about him, and, girl-like, I had no curiosity to prompt me to fathom the mystery of his existence or non-existence, if mystery there was. At the evening parties given by Agnes and her mother we met all the celebrities

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

of the day, among them Louis Blane, who was an exile, after the French Revolution of 1848, and wrote "De l'Organisation du Travail," the origin of Trade Unionism. It was only recently, while drawing on the stores of memory for this story of the past, that I began for the first time to wonder who and what Mr. Loudon was, but as Agnes and her mother were long since dead and the coterie broken up, the wonder of the moment slipped quietly back into the shadows whence it sprang. Strange to say, only a few days later, while turning over a little rubbish-heap of my uncle Harry Wills' old MSS., I came upon a dirty-looking brown paper pamphlet pocked over with drippings of wax candle, almost too dirty to touch. On venturing to open it there lay before me "A Short Account of the Life and Writings of John Claudius Loudon," by his widow! I always knew that she had written books on botany and gardening, but now, for the first time in all these long years, I learnt that he was the teacher, and she the faithful disciple of a great man. Turning over the page, I beheld the face of the man for the first time, so far as I am aware, in a beautiful engraving, the original of which must have been drawn by an able artist; and there, traceable in his features, were those of Agnes, who died in 1864, to the grief of her husband, Markham Spofforth.

And the dirty little pamphlet, what else did it contain? One of the most interesting histories of human life I ever remember to have riveted me to the winter fireside till the glow died out, and chill set in with the tragic death of the man.

When only twenty-four years of age he wrote a

## JOHN CLAUDIUS LOUDON

paper which excited a great deal of attention at the time, and might be of value even now, on "An immediate and effectual mode of raising the rental of the landed property of England ; and rendering Great Britain independent of other nations for a supply of bread corn."

He could not look over the surface of this fair globe of ours without seeing the vast need for improving the land. He saw *then* that we were all asleep, and did everything he could to waken up the landed proprietors, the farmers, and the nation to national wants.

He travelled through Russia over the death-strewn tracks of Napoleon, and through many countries, studying agricultural methods, and kept writing and working with ceaseless energy. In the midst of his work he fell a victim to rheumatic fever, after which his knee became ankylosed and his right arm intolerably painful. For this he submitted to shampooing, which was carried on with such vigour and stretching that the masseur succeeded in breaking his arm near the shoulder in such a way that it could never unite. Still, he went on using that arm and allowed nothing to interfere with his work. Some years later he found the crippled arm so much in his way that he determined to have it off, and here is the account of the operation in a single paragraph written by a friend after his death :—

"Mr. Loudon was a man of great fortitude and unwearied industry. The morning that Doctors Thompson and Lauder called upon him for the purpose of amputating his right arm, they met him in the garden, and asked if he had fully made up

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

his mind to undergo the operation. 'Oh, yes, certainly,' he said; 'it was for that purpose I sent for you'; and added very coolly, 'but you had better step in and just have a little lunch first before you begin.' After lunch he walked upstairs quite composedly, talking to the doctors on general subjects. When all the ligatures were tied and everything complete, he was about to step downstairs, as a matter of course to go on with his business; and the doctors had great difficulty to prevail upon him to go to bed."

No chloroform in these days, nor lethel aid of any kind. Not a word about nurses. No sign of previous preparation. No antiseptic treatment. How was it done? Did he sit on a chair, or recline calmly on a sofa? There is no indication that he even undressed! Was it human flesh and blood? Was this being with the luminous eyes and fine intellectual features made differently to other human beings in that he could have his arm amputated one moment, and want to come downstairs as a matter of course the next? Behind mere tenacity of purpose there must have been a spirit superhuman, something above and beyond the triumph of mind over matter.

In his efforts to get on with his work he employed at one time seven artists for his illustrations and two amanuenses, and "was frequently known to dictate to both at the same time!"<sup>1</sup> His life was finally cut short by lung disease, the knowledge of which only made him work the harder. Mrs. Loudon in her memoir describes the last moments thus:—

<sup>1</sup> "Life of John Claudius Loudon."



## MIT BUCKLAND

“He now appeared very ill, and told me he thought he should never live to finish ‘Self-Instruction’; but that he would ask his friend Dr. Jamieson, to whom he had previously spoken on the subject, to finish the work for him. Soon after this he became very restless, and walked several times from the drawing-room to his bedroom and back again. I feel that I cannot continue these melancholy details; it is sufficient to say that, though his body became weaker every moment, his mind retained all its vigour to the last, and that he died standing on his feet. Fortunately, I perceived a change taking place in his countenance, and had just time to clasp my arms round him to save him from falling, when his head sank on my shoulder, and he was no more.”

This, then, was the man to whose home we were always so cordially welcomed long after he was in his grave; and once more it is within the walls of this my treasure-house that the tale is mutely told, by the dead who return to speak, to live again.

Another charming English girl who used to visit us Scottish girls in Scotia’s capital was Mit Buckland, eldest daughter of the Dean of Westminster of that period. There was nothing in the world she could not do, and nothing she did not know. Her long, slim waist was our admiration from the fit of her gowns, all of which were made by herself. Everything she wore was exquisitely made and embroidered by herself. Old point lace adorned her evening toilettes—all made by herself. When my brother used to come home after a day’s shooting at the Bass Rock, she would lay hands on the Solan



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

geese and set to work in the pantry to skin them for grebe muffs and boas for the family. I cannot say the process of dressing the skins was altogether fragrant, but as she kept them in her own bedroom no one could complain. Her brother, Dr. Frank Buckland, then regimental surgeon of the Blues, used to send her the horrible stuff with which the dressing was effected, while the skins were stretched and nailed all over her travelling-trunks!

When we came to reside in London the Deanery was one of our most delightful haunts. The staircase and most of the rooms formed a continuous museum, and on dining there it was necessary to be careful, as Frank had a friendly way of sending in dainties from his own private zoological collection. One evening we were all sitting out on the roof, when Frank came up and insisted on taking us to a spot where we were sure to see the ghost. We were told to keep quiet, and breathlessly followed Frank through the mazes of the Cathedral. The ghost did not appear, but the very sensation of stealing silently through the cloisters and wandering among the tombs in the dark can never be forgotten.

Another interesting girl companion of our youth was Zoé—I forget her surname, but she married Dr. Thompson, who became Archbishop of York. While resident in Oxford she was styled the Queen of Queen's, and was much admired. During the meeting of the British Association at that seat of learning she and the Provost of Queen's entertained my father and my twin, Dr. Priestley and myself at dinner, along with many interesting *savants*. It was at this meeting that my father was instrumental in

## HUXLEY

persuading Huxley to be present at the Bishop of Oxford's attack on the new cult concerning the origin of species, he having expressed his intention of not being present. The triumph for the Darwinians on the occasion is well known and fully explained in the Life of Huxley by his son.

Without attempting to be too chronological, I think it was in the second year of our marriage that a third appointment, that of consulting physician to the Marylebone Infirmary, fell to our lot and afforded further hopefulness. Practice, too, was on the increase, as indicated by the money-box, which, on being opened at the end of the second year, revealed gleanings to the extent of £150. We had now come very near the end of our capital, which still left us a balance of £200. We stood thus with the third year facing us and with two extra mouths to feed (the nurse and child):—

Balance	...	...	...	...	...	...	£200
Professional fees gathered up	...	...	...	...	...	...	210
Cash	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
							<hr/>
							£460
							<hr/>

As there was no reason to suppose practice would diminish, we faced the world cheerfully, more especially as the various little appointments were bringing my husband under the notice of his professional brethren. At this time we knew few London doctors, and those were mostly old friends of my father. Chief among these were Sir James Clarke, always very kind and interested, Dr. Neill Arnott, Sir Charles Locock, Sir William Fergusson, Sir Henry Thompson, and Dr. Murchison.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Now, strange to say, it was at the beginning of the third year that my husband seemed to rush into practice as if some spell had been broken. Indirectly through his lectures at the Grosvenor Place School of Medicine he received an appointment at the Middlesex Hospital as lecturer on the diseases of women and children, with charge of a ward.

At the end of our third year the dear little money-box was swallowed up by the Union Bank of London, and, after languishing in the background a few years, dissolved into space, as other material things are apt to do if neglected. It now survives as an interesting memory only.

## CHAPTER IX

It is now the year 1863, the month is March, and we have been nearly seven years married. For the last four years we had enjoyed the luxury of a house of our own opposite to the Mills', and had suffered the sorrow of losing our first little girl. It was now found desirable as our fortunes improved to migrate to a better quarter, hence we were established in 17, Hertford Street, Mayfair, within a few doors of Dr. Arthur Farre on the one side and Sir Charles Locock on the other.

Our professional income had now reached £1,600 a year and was rapidly increasing, but owing to the expenses involved by the change we were landed in a debt of £500.

However, as the rent was at that time moderate (it was doubled at the end of the lease), our immediate relatives thought we were fully justified in making the venture. Besides, my husband, with the great good-fortune that so far pursued him, had now blossomed forth as a professor, having been appointed to fill the chair of Gynæcology (vacated by Dr. Farre) at King's College, with charge of the Nightingale wards in the hospital.

So all was going well with us. My parents had left Edinburgh for good, and had settled down at Verulam House, a charming residence in St. John's



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Wood, which became a centre of interest for family and friends.

Meanwhile, in the brightest of skies a little cloud was gathering, but we scarcely noticed it, for all the world was gay, and could think of nothing but the lovely Danish bride who was passing through London to wed the Prince of Wales.

We had seats at a window in Piccadilly, but my husband was joyless among the joyful and looked ill. Work had thickened upon him, and we thought it was over-fatigue. That night he was called out to attend a case and got home about eleven o'clock next morning. The dining-room was full of people waiting to see him, and he thought after a little rest he might be able to attend to them. He lay down on his bed without undressing, and being naturally of a calm disposition, thought he would be quite well soon. At this point Dr. Arthur Farre called and wished to see him, but when he tried to get up he fell back fainting. I immediately sent for Dr. Farre to come upstairs, and on my own responsibility cleared the house of the "ladies in waiting," as my father used to call them. Dr. Farre was aghast to see his *confrère* looking so ill, and, on making an examination of his throat, did not like the appearance. Drawing me aside, he advised me to take matters in hand at once and get Jenner to come and see him. Dr. West, who was attending our children, volunteered to take general charge of the case, for it had now been pronounced diphtheria. He also undertook to give the first course of lectures for him at King's College, and be the *locum tenens* so far as possible.



## DIPHTHERIA

It turned out that my husband had caught the infection from the children of a lady he was attending, and although he only saw them once and pronounced the illness diphtheria, the mischief was done. Alas, what those few minutes cost us! but these are the chances that doctors have to take.

Throughout the family and circle of friends fearful consternation ensued. I sent my children off to Verulam House, and never saw them again for weeks. Every servant I could spare was sent away to reduce the danger of infection. And now I had to face the terrors of the day and of the night alone. These were not the days of trained nurses, and throughout the long fight I only once succeeded in persuading a nurse to come for a few days, but she drank all the brandy and was useless.

The first week was a terrible experience, for every hour made matters worse. I was so panic-stricken one night when he looked blue and cadaverous after a fit of choking, that I wrapped myself in a cloak and rushed down to Dr. Farre's, and finding him in his room exclaimed, "Oh, Dr. Farre, I fear he will die in the night if another fit of choking comes on."

"In all probability he will, my child, but you are doing your best, and there is nothing more that can be done."

Back I flew to take up the awful vigil alone. Mercifully, while in the sick-room I never broke down, but was given supernatural strength to bear the work. My one idea was never to let him lose hope, nor imagine he was dying, and indeed his natural serenity was so remarkable that I was fain

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

to believe I succeeded, till early one morning he calmly told me what to do in the event of his death ! I had already thought of this contingency with the additional possibility of my own death from the same cause, and had written my father a letter committing our children to his care, and desiring that my twin should be their mother and send them to a school in which she was deeply interested. This was my will, written in the most solemn moments of my life, and I knew it was a will that would not be easily upset.

There was something inexpressibly strange in the feeling of dumb resignation that came over me at this time. Our married life had been so happy that my dear father used to say it was a marriage made in heaven. Life was so rosy ! And, like a rose, was unfolding itself under the genial warmth of prosperity, giving glimpses of better things to come with fuller maturity. Maturity ? No, that was not to be ours ; we could not even hope to be a memory to our children. All was rapidly passing away from us.

Nothing surprised me more than to feel still perfectly well as hour after hour went on. Every morning when the doctors assembled they examined my throat in the adjoining room before entering the sick-room, which was on the drawing-room floor. I can see now—with a clearness time cannot dim—the face of Dr. Jenner (not yet Sir William) as he stood at the bedside, gazing anxiously and silently at his patient. Then his small eyes would turn ominously round the room, taking in the surroundings, of which he highly disapproved. The room was as we found

## THE SICK-ROOM

it and ideally beautiful, but deadly in case of sickness. It had been prepared for Lady Mary Craven on her marriage. The walls were thickly padded to deaden sound, and were covered with blue damask quilted in with gilt rose buttons. The bed and windows were furnished with the same damask, the effect of which was most luxurious. In the canopy of the bed a mahogany toilette tray would descend on drawing a cord, and would remain suspended high or low as desired, being supported by heavy weights at the back. The room was octagon, and was reached either through the drawing-room or bath-room which led to the back stairs. This was the room severely condemned by the leading doctors of the day. The patient for a fortnight was too ill to be moved, but the drawing-room was prepared as a sick-room when the proper moment should arrive.

The doctors, who were keenly sensible of the danger to myself, now insisted that I should go out for an hour every day, and, further, that I should sleep upstairs, while medical friends would take it in turn to sit up all night. This was a terrible trial to me, as all my self-possession broke down outside the sick-room. My nights were spent in weeping, and every day when my twin came to take me out for a drive I could do nothing but cry. How well I remember the exquisite sensibility that prompted her when we had to pass a funeral to divert my attention the other way! Little we thought then that before the year was out I should be spared and she taken!

At last the crisis was past, and it became possible

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

to make the move into the properly-appointed, carpetless, curtainless, model sick-room. The housemaid who helped me throughout had everything ready when, extraordinary to relate, the bedroom chimney took fire and was belching forth smoke into the room. In a moment I threw something over the invalid's head, and in another moment was safely wheeling him into the next room and away into the room beyond, where the smoke could not reach us. I felt so thankful that the rescue was effected at the very moment all was ready, that the fact of the chimney being on fire gave me not the smallest concern.

During the whole of this time the sympathy and kindness manifested by friends in and out of the profession and by relatives was extraordinary. In Edinburgh, where my husband was so much loved and esteemed, a bulletin was put up daily outside the door of 52, Queen Street. The professor telegraphed for news every day, and the commotion was great. At home the house was besieged with inquiries, and friends sent every imaginable thing for the invalid, from champagne and the finest 100-year-old brandy to Chinese birds'-nest soup. It was overwhelming, but extremely gratifying, and did much to cheer me up.

In these days the true cause of the disease was unknown, and there was no merciful antidote in the serum which is now employed to stay the fell action of the living and invisible parasites. We had simply to face the effects of a mysterious toxin which had power to play havoc with the nerves, destroying apparently their continuity like a silken thread worn



## BELLEVUE

to breaking point, and when severed causing paralysis. It was tragic to see the loss of power spreading gradually over the body.

The feeding was a difficulty, the eyes squinted, the hands were helpless, the feet tottering. At this point the doctors, influenced by Dr. Gueneau de Mussy, advised his going to a hydropathic establishment at Bellevue, near Meudon, six miles from Paris, not for the sake of the water cure, but because the French doctors had a larger experience of diphtheric paralysis than the English, and, anyhow, he would have men to lift him and to wheel him about in such a place.

After a short sojourn at Brighton all was arranged for our journey to Paris. My twin preceded us, and took up her quarters with Miss Douglas, who was residing in Paris at that time. She made all the necessary arrangements for our advent at the Grand Hotel and departure next day for Dr. Bourgignon's establishment at Bellevue.

Aunt Janet and Uncle Harry (Mr. and Mrs. Wills) accompanied us to Folkestone and saw us off in the boat the following morning. My husband at this stage was practically helpless and had to be carried on a chair or in porter's arms everywhere. When we arrived at Boulogne a medical friend was waiting to receive us, and was horrified to find that the two porters who lifted him from the boat thought he was drunk owing to his vain efforts to explain matters, and consequently bundled him on to the ground like a bale of goods. I had been separated by the crowd, and saw it in great distress of mind. However, he was soon in more merciful hands, and carried



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

tenderly to a boarding-house close by, where we had every attention and comfort.

In Paris the faithful twin was waiting to receive us with servants and a medical friend. Next day we were at our destination. The *etablissement* was an old-fashioned house with large dining-hall and a garden celebrated for the magnificent view of Paris. A few years later this areadia fell into the hands of the Prussians, whose one idea was dealing death from the terrace on which we had spent many days in balmy slumbers, seeking health and trying to woo back life.

It was the month of May, and we were foreigners in a strange land, but the recipients of untold kindness and endless sympathy. At first the invalid could be carried to his place at table and I could feed him ; then came a time when his place was left vacant and I alone appeared, but at first with my twin for company. She hoped to help in the nursing, but this was impossible. Seeing that the nursing was becoming more arduous as the paralysis increased, she hastened to London to secure a nurse and send her on, but no nurse could be induced to go so far. Meanwhile her health had given way and the reports became grave. Before the real note of alarm was struck my mother came out to join me, but her health broke down, and I was glad to send her home. Men nurses were put on night duty, but this was no relief to me, for I could too plainly *hear* them sleeping while trying to sleep myself in the adjoining room. Hence midnight vigilance on my part was never relaxed till the tide turned, and I can now remember the sense of neglected duty from which I suffered for

## BAD NEWS

a long time after being able to go to bed in the usual way.

While my husband was getting deeper and deeper into the abyss which threatened to hold him for ever the bulletins from home were more and more deplorable. My father, too, was now ill, and for some hours my stoicism gave way. Matters were in this state when a visitor was announced, a "monsieur from Angleterre." This was Dr. Alexander Simpson, nephew of the professor, who was sent as an envoy plenipotentary to bring back particulars as to the condition of Dr. Priestley and his surroundings. He had recently seen my father in Edinburgh, and with some difficulty told me that the Edinburgh physicians—with whom he had had a consultation—considered he was suffering from a mortal complaint! I felt in despair, for all those I loved best on earth appeared to be dying around me. The links in the family chain that had held us together so long were breaking.

I longed to fly to them, but was held back by the higher duty, and, truth to say, the more urgent necessity. I could picture my mother in the one room, my twin in another, both doomed, and my little children playing merrily in the garden outside. August had now come, and my husband lay in a state of complete paralysis, when fever set in and he complained of pain in his throat. I looked at the throat, and was horrified to see there was a growth upon it like a mild form of the original diphtheric growth. I wrote to Dr. Gueneau de Mussy and also, I think, to Dr. Jenner, describing it as a "baby diphtheria." They immediately became alarmed,

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

and after consulting together, telegraphed to the two leading physicians in Paris who had seen him on his first arrival. Consequently, the next day my heart was uplifted by the arrival of Drs. Roget and Trousseau. I was present during the consultation, which was conducted entirely in French, but by this time my ear had become so accustomed to that language from hearing no other, that I could understand all that was said, and more especially that which was unsaid. The fever was very high and the invalid unable to articulate. The doctors were extremely anxious to ascertain what he, as a doctor, thought of his own case. I handed him the slate, and he was able to write in French that in his experience an attack of high fever with throat affection such as this meant death or the beginning of recovery. They all agreed, and I was left once more to gather myself together and be ready for either contingency. It was an awful crisis, a time of trembling anxiety, but in a few days it turned in favour of life.

Every morning the resident doctors tried their galvanic battery on his feet, and I shall never forget my joy when the big toe of one foot began to move. From this time muscular power began to come back, and recovery slowly set in. I rose gladly every night to give him his *bouillon* while the man nurse lay snoring on the floor. Our great longing was now to get nearer home, although the prospect of returning to work seemed woefully far off. When the hour of our departure at length came, all the people of the *etablissement* turned out to bid us adieu, and the scene was more like a wedding than that of an invalid simply moving to another spot. Bouquets

## DEATH OF MY MOTHER

were heaped upon us, hands of many nations shook ours, some shouted, women wept and kissed me. The demonstration showed how deeply they had all felt for *les Anglais*.

When we arrived at Boulogne we knew we should be well cared for at the boarding-house where we had rested before. It belonged to a man who had been for years in the service of Queen Victoria as caterer or manager of some department that qualified him as a first-class host. His daughter was called Victoria after her godmother, the Queen. With our medical friend on the spot we were content there to abide, for no Grand Hotel was ever more comfortable.

At last the dreaded message came. I was summoned to my mother's death-bed. In grief I started by the first boat, and arrived at London Bridge late that night. At Verulam House I found the family astir, stealing softly about in the subdued atmosphere of death. My dear mother recognized me, and asked, "How is Priestley?" These were her last consecutive words, but she was more or less conscious till the moment of her death next morning.

It was now October, and after spending a melancholy week with my children, my sick father, and my suffering twin, I had to return to my post. Janet (my twin) had been moved down to the drawing-room at the request of the doctors, who said she might have to be there all the winter. Before carrying her down she had been taken into her mother's room for the last embrace, for both knew they would never meet again. So there I left her pillowed up in bed, encircled in a mantle of long fair hair, which sparkled in the sunlight with every



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

movement. The yellow satin curtains of the room also caught the light, and seemed to add an unearthly glory to the scene. In front of her bed a fountain was playing among the plants in the conservatory, and formed a running accompaniment to our leave-taking as we blew kisses across to each other on parting. Thus I gradually receded away from my twin for ever. The doctor had assured me I could safely leave, as there was no immediate danger, but that spiritual face told another tale, and my heart was full of woe. Still I had to go.

Three weeks later a storm was raging in the Channel, and I was watching the Folkestone boat appearing and disappearing in the surf and mist, as it fought to clear the bar and get in, when a telegram was handed to me. This was another messenger of death. Janet was dying, the internal abscess having burst on the very morning fixed for the operation, and she wished to see me. I longed to go, I would have risked my life, but no boat would start! I passed the day in inexpressible agony of mind, telegrams following one another, "She is always asking if you have come" was one, till finally towards evening all was over. She died a month after her mother, and was laid in the same grave at the age of twenty-seven.

Meanwhile the storm continued to rage, and there was no hope of my ever seeing her dear face again, even in its last sleep. The following letter from my aunt, Mrs. Wills, reached me while the storm still raged :—

"There are no words to tell you how full our hearts are of tender pity for you in this trying crisis.



## DEATH OF MY TWIN

Every hour almost we have been hoping you would be here. We never for a moment forgot that of all the sufferers you are the one most to be sympathized with ; we are all here, and we know all that has taken place in its mournful details, but you are helpless, longing to be with us, and no human power can help you. . . . The consolation of seeing her sweet face even in death will be denied you."

Over the further details we must draw a veil, but the following letters, showing the estimation in which she was held by those even outside the home circle, may have a special interest :—

From Miss Catherine Sinelair.

Monday, November 2nd, 1863.

DEAR MR. CHAMBERS,

You have been much in my thoughts lately, and with a degree of sorrowful sympathy not to be expressed. No one estimated more deeply than I the admirable gifts and graces which rendered Janet Chambers a name of almost magical interest to all who knew her—to know her was to love her, and a more attractive character I never knew. During her short life, how much good she has done ! and how unostentatiously she did it ! I owe much to the assistance and management she gave in first establishing my Industrial School, where she was beloved and respected by the pupils with perfect enthusiasm. She visited it with me every Saturday, and her arrival was hailed with delight by the whole school. Her addresses to the girls were full of genius and invariably appropriate, while she enlivened all she said with a degree of humour and

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

good-humour peculiar to herself. She will be deeply lamented by all my girls, who can scarcely yet believe that one so bright and so gifted is no more. Lady Glasgow and I shall long remember our last visit to her bedroom, when she looked already quite angelic, but we little apprehended then that we should see her no more.

Who ever had a happier home than you, when I look back a very few years upon old times when your promising family were all in health and prosperity round your cheerful fireside?

I am most anxious to hear whether there be any hope, that in leaving the scene of so much sorrow, you will again restore yourself to Edinburgh, where you are so cordially estimated and so intimately known. My brother, Sir George (*who will mourn with you now*), has suffered deeply in the loss of his lovely granddaughter, his wife, and his sister, but he promises to come this winter to us for consolation, and I wish you would meet him in Edin. Lady Glasgow desires to unite with me in kindest sympathy and

Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours in heartfelt sorrow,

CATHERINE SINCLAIR.

From J. S. Blackie (Professor of Greek).

24, Hill Street, Edinburgh.

November 15th, 1863.

The press of business has prevented me from fully realizing the great blank to myself occasioned by the removal of your noble daughter. I count it as one of the greatest blessings of my life to have

## PROFESSOR BLACKIE

known intimately a woman at once so pure in heart, so lofty in intellect, so firm in character, so cheerful in disposition, so graceful and commonly dignified in every act of life. I dare not dwell on her departure without bringing tears to my eyes ; but there is no bitterness in such tears : they exercise rather a sacred power over me, which no radiance of common worldly joy, even the brightest, could confer.

I hear a report that you are soon to leave London, and return to the land you love, and which, I am sure, loves you. If this be so, I hope you will frequently give us the pleasure of seeing you, and afford us an opportunity of showing with how much more than ordinary friendship we regard the father of Janet Chambers.

Believe me,

My dear Chambers,

Ever yours,

Most sincerely,

JOHN S. BLACKIE.

The distinguished man to whom she was engaged at the time of her death sent an artist to take a cast of her face with a view to having a marble bust made for my father, but as he had never seen my twin during her life he expressed the wish that I should give him one or two sittings, which I eventually did. On arriving at the studio by appointment, the artist came forward carrying the cast to show me, but in that white lifeless thing I could see nothing to associate it with the radiant face I had beheld only a few weeks before, with the

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

golden hair waving around it. But as I gazed, fascinated, I felt the dew of faintness breaking over me, and all the world vanishing, for in that cold image I saw my own face dead !

On the measurements being taken they were found to be identical. In the course of time a beautiful marble bust was sent to my father, and a *bas-relief*, mounted in a handsome oak triptych with brass-mounted doors, was sent to myself by the same donor as a memento of my twin.

As soon as it was possible we decided to return home, although there was still no prospect of returning to work. Our presence in London, such as it was, would be some comfort to my father, so bereft of lifelong companionship, so lost in his surroundings. The two youngest daughters had to go to school, and the rest had homes of their own.

In December we arrived back at Hertford Street like waifs, moneyless and in debt. It was arranged that my father and two sisters should share our home for the time being, and Verulam House be given up. To have my father under my care was a great comfort, as his health required management and thought. Fortunately the London doctors took a more hopeful view of his case than did those he had seen in Edinburgh, and, as things turned out, he lived for seven years longer, although he never recovered his health.

A whole grief-laden year passed over our heads before my husband was able to face the world and begin again. He had missed his first course of lectures at King's College, but he and I together

## RECOVERY

were now busily engaged in making wonderful models to illustrate the lectures that were announced to come off at 9 o'clock so many times a week during the session. Patients too began to come in, first by degrees, and then with a rush.

At the end of the first year of our restoration we had paid off all debts, and were marching steadily onward, gathering up the broken threads of practice as we went, and interweaving them with the precious threads of unbroken friendships that lay everywhere in our path.





## PART THE SECOND

### CHAPTER I

ON coming back to the world after our long sojourn in the valleys overshadowed by sickness and death, I was conscious of certain new experiences not altogether uninteresting to look back on.

At first the independence of my husband was a source of trouble to me, for I could not all at once become accustomed to the fact that my babe of a year had escaped from the bondage of his pupillage, and burst forth on the world a man in full possession of his powers. Then I was still pursued with the constant desire to write every passing thought to my twin, and could not easily break with the habit of confiding all little domestic troubles to my mother. Between the healthful independence of the one, and the awe-full silence of the others, I felt that some convulsion of nature had taken place and left me stranded where I stood. Slowly from this oppression I began to see my way through the enveloping clouds, and to recognize the welcome fact that my babe was not lost to me for ever, and that he, and others, were still dependent on me for domestic comfort and care.

Notwithstanding the alarming independence of the physician there still remained the husband's

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

trusting dependence on the wife that every physician feels when merged in the business that centres in the home, goes on around the home, and yet is more or less outside the home life. Thus it falls to the doctor's wife so to arrange the home that her husband can command peace of mind as much in the professional as in the domestic routine of daily life. She ought, in fact, to be "the guardian angel sitting on the ladder of her husband's fame," as Victor Hugo's wife was said to be.

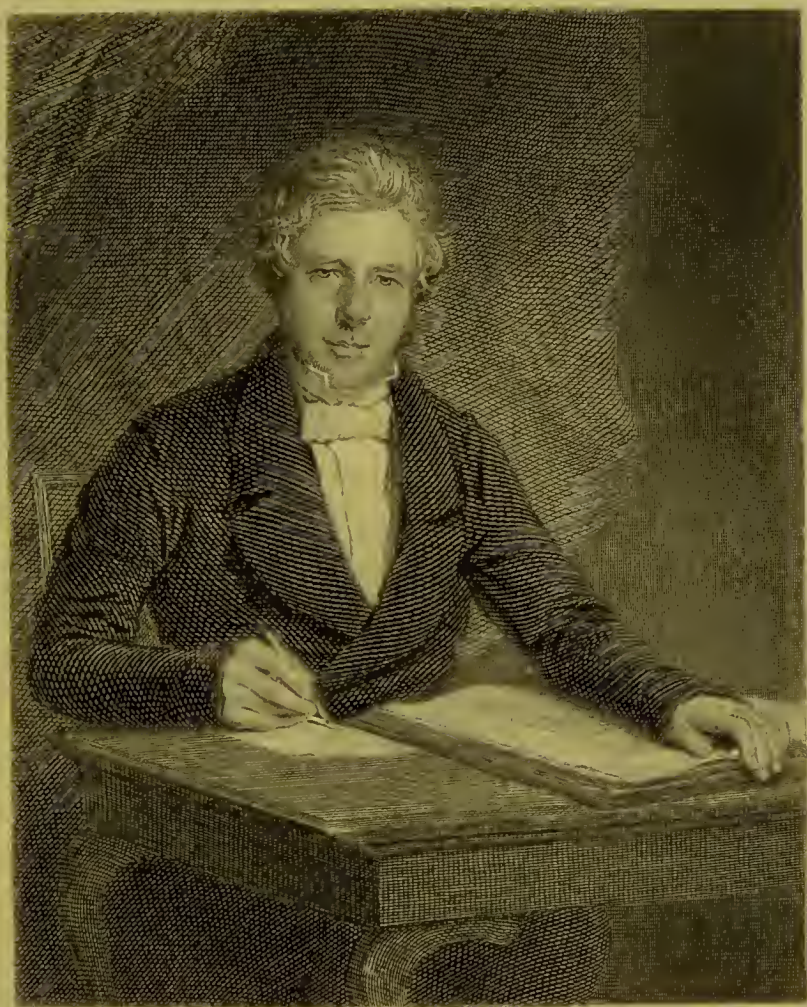
My father, who was now under our roof, was necessarily, in his feeble state of health, a great charge ; but it was delightful to feel he was placidly happy, surrounded by his own books and interested in the busy life going on around him. He was so gentle, so gladly obedient and trusting, that our relations of only a year ago had become reversed, for he was now the child, and I once more had become the mother of a full-grown man !

His occupations now were very different to those to which he was accustomed for so many years of his life. Instead of going to his study both before and immediately after breakfast, to write for the whole forenoon, his pen lay idle, and his time was passed at the Athenæum Club, in reading, and in visits to the S. C. Halls, where spiritual manifestations took place under the influence of Mr. Home, the celebrated medium. These uncanny *séances* came to an end a few years later (at the time when my father was living at St. Andrew's), owing to the *cause célèbre* which exposed the medium and made him restore the money he had obtained *spiritually* from a widow, Mrs. Lyon, who had obeyed the









*N. Chambers.*



## HENRY WILLS

spirit of her deceased husband by handing him over £30,000 !

A source of great solace to my father was the friendship of his sister, Mrs. Wills, and her husband, "Uncle Harry," the brightest and most delightful companion. He was then in partnership with Charles Dickens in "All the Year Round," and assistant-editor of that journal. He was a man of boundless energy and spirit, the man of whom Thackeray said, when looking for an assistant-editor for the "Cornhill Magazine," "If there were only another Wills, my fortune would be made !" He adored his wife and loved her relations. There was nothing he would not do for those he loved, and happy were they who came within the sphere of his influence. He was passionately fond of hunting, and as he knew that it amused my children to see him in pink, he would do his utmost to dash into the nursery in passing, and with a "Tally-ho" would soon be leading the field over chairs, stools, and toys, in full cry after an imaginary fox. The chase might not last longer than a few minutes, but he always considered the time and energy well spent in the pleasure it gave. Considering the brain work, which was always at high pressure, it is extraordinary how he found time to devote to his family, helping those near and far in a variety of ways. He considered his wife the cleverest and most delightful woman living, and the greatest wit. At the time she married Mr. Wills he was assistant-editor of the "Daily News," and was on the first staff of "Punch." She therefore found herself in the place intended for her by nature, and enchanted them all with her

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

ready wit and quaint humour. It was in these early days she wrote a very clever article, headed, "The Monster Unveiled," the monster being her own husband as he must appear to the neighbours who knew how to keep an eye on newly-married couples! The monster was observed to come home in the small hours of morning and was doing everything a respectable married man should not, and the editor of a daily paper must!

She used to give informal little evening parties. On these occasions she was the centre of interest, and depending entirely on her own voice, without accompaniment, would sit in the middle of the room, with an admiring circle of *littérateurs* all round, and sing quaint old Scottish songs. I remember on one occasion being present when she sang "Our gudeman cam hame at e'en." A husband was supposed to come home unexpectedly and find "a pair o' buits where nae buits should be," and as the incidents were droll and very dramatic she held her audience in a spell of wild enchantment, Charles Dickens and the "staffs" being convulsed. A general call for "The Sunday School," which represented a class of laddies rattling off the psalms, pronounced "saums," of David, finished the entertainment.

She enjoyed the family gift of writing impromptus in verse, and wrote the following to my mother in acknowledgment of some shortbread:—

There never was such bread before,  
So crisp, so nice, so rare,  
Sure this must be the daily bread  
We ask for in the prayer.



## 'THE WILLS'

Yet with arrangements as they are,  
That would not well comport;  
For grumbling people then would say  
Their bread was rather *short*.

But still we must not quite forget  
The burden of the song,  
Man wants but little here below,  
Nor wants that little *long*.

In the course of time and as fortunes improved, the Wills moved by gradual and cautious stages from villa to villa till they arrived at their pretty house in Regent's Park Terrace, which brings them up to the period at present reached in my story. The little "evenings" had given place to little dinners, which were never formal, but exquisitely arranged, as my aunt was fastidious in matters pertaining to the table, and in person was always as neat as an ermine, as the Americans say. One night at their house I was sitting next to Dickens, who had come to meet Count Tolstoy at dinner,<sup>1</sup> when the conversation turned on maternal instinct, and *per contra* the child's divine instinct of love for the mother. In the midst of the discussion for and against, I plunged in with a little experience of my own, which seemed to *bouleverser* both sides of the question. It was this. When my first child was a few months old my twin arrived on a visit, and as it was about time the child was awaking from his morning sleep we slipped quietly into the nursery together to await events. My twin stationed herself at the head of the bed, ready to kiss the child, while I kept out of sight at the bottom. Presently the little man awoke, and seeing what he took to be

<sup>1</sup> Not Tolstoi, the novelist, but literary, nevertheless.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

his mother, stretched out his hands and drew himself into her arms. Just at that moment he saw me emerge, his lip fell, a cry of terror went up, and turning away from me, he clung shrieking round the neck of the wrong mother! It was difficult to say where the divine instinct came in, more particularly as the child before the day was over had calmly accepted both mothers, showing no more favour to the one than to the other, although he was afraid of strangers. Dickens was against any theory of divine instinct, and thought my experience confirmed his view.

At this time the Fred Lehmanns were living in Westbourne Terrace, and with their combined talents were able to gather round them the chief celebrities of the musical and literary world. Owing to early friendship with the young Dickenses, my sister, Mrs. Fred Lehmann, and the two daughters, Mary and Katherine Dickens—Mamie and Kitty—remained inseparable friends to the end of their lives. This formed another link and brought us all together at the odd moments of our increasingly busy life.

At this period there happened to be living in London a lady whom all knew who were in any way associated with literature, as she had a craze for knowing literary people and artists of every kind. I need not mention her name, although she and her husband have been dead for years, as it will equally answer the purpose if I call her Susan. Susan was a great invalid and had a ghastly look, and although unable to push about bodily, was determined to be known among the celebrities she idealized. So she lay on her couch all day embroidering and weaving

## "SUSAN"

the most exquisite things, which in due course found their way, accompanied by flattering letters, to the various objects of her worship. Thus it came about that at my sister's house one evening every one of the guests sitting round the dinner-table had received a present from Susan, the universal admirer! Although it is nearly forty years ago, and I am the only person living who was present, I remember the occasion very well.

The guests were (Sir) Charles Hallé, next to whom I sat, Chorley, the musical critic, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Sir Edwin Landseer, Mrs. Procter, and ourselves. The party was quite informal. Some one began admiring Wilkie's beautiful embroidered waistcoat (I think it was Wilkie who had the waistcoat), when he mentioned with great pride having received it from Susan. "Oh," said my husband, "pray don't think you are the only honoured person; look at my handkerchief," showing the initials beautifully embroidered. Then all the other guests, including host and hostess, followed, being able to mention slippers, smoking caps, &c. Not many years after this my husband received a confidential little note from the great Susan, asking the loan of a small sum, two or three hundred pounds, as her husband refused to give her a penny, and in return for the loan she would undertake to make a codicil to her will leaving him double the sum with interest. This transaction he declined to touch, so others were tried, but in vain, till a well-known portrait painter fell into the trap and advanced the money. His wife told me afterwards that the first shock they received was the arrival of exquisite presents for

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

her husband, self, and every one of the children ! The second shock was the death of Susan, the repudiation of the debt by Mr. Susan, no codicil, nothing, in fact, but a mere Will-o'-the-wisp ! Thus it was proved that Mrs. Leo Hunters are dangerous friends, and "flatterers the worst kind of enemies." <sup>1</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Lehmann having now determined to live in London, took the artistic house that had belonged to John Philips, the well-known painter of Spanish scenes, at Campden Hill. This drew into the family circle Fred Leighton and many of the leading painters of the day. Millais we had known previously to his marriage, hence his cheery greeting whenever I entered his studio, "Come in ; I've known you from your cradle !"

My sister, Mrs. Rudolph, having been born a musician, as we have already seen, was also a good linguist, the finely-trained ear enabling her to catch up the characteristic tone and accent of every language she spoke.

Thus in the midst of struggling, seething, strenuous London were all these little social centres established, each with its own power of attraction, and like the planetary system all revolving round each other.

With all these spheres about us we found our own particular sphere being drawn more and more away from the Ideal into the vortex of the Real, for in the course of our profession we were launched into other scenes, and brought face to face with the sternest realities of life.

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus.

## CHAPTER II

FEW people outside the limits of medical life have the least conception of the trials, anxieties and responsibilities of that profession. In the course of a single day every physician or surgeon of repute is called on to go through all the alternations of hope and fear in every known degree. He is quick to perceive the danger-signals that have no significance for others, and can watch the gathering of the storms while the sun is still unclouded. In a single round of visits and consultations he encounters people in the depth of woe, and others in the height of gladness, thus drawing on the emotions and keeping in constant tension every sense he possesses. His success in life depends not only on judgment, and minute attention to detail, but on his tact in the management of each individual patient according to temperament and surroundings. While some are grateful, others are harassing, and draw continually upon the patience. The late Sir Andrew Clark once told me he could not endure the clever patients, for they worried him to death with their pertinacity and ignorance! Yet all has to be endured, for the medical man cannot choose his own patients, they choose him. Again, there are circles into which it is a privilege to enter, for whether from the sense of *noblesse oblige*, or otherwise, the bond that holds the



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

family and the doctor together is, as a rule, that of confidence, sympathy and respect.

In this, the first year of our restoration, 1864, my husband received the command of Her Majesty Queen Victoria to go to Darmstadt, to attend her daughter, Princess Louis of Hesse. The child born on that occasion is now the Grand Duchess Sergius of Russia. The following year he was asked to attend H.R.H. the Comtesse de Paris, at York House, Twickenham, and the daughter born then is now the Queen of Portugal. This event was full of interest for the royal exiles of France, as the birth of this Princess started the new generation of the lineal descendants from the last king, Louis Philippe. The old Queen Marie Amélie, who was a daughter of Ferdinand, king of the Two Sicilies, was then living at Claremont, and was immediately brought to York House and carried upstairs to see her first great-grandchild. She died six months afterwards, at the age of eighty-four.

Thus my husband enjoyed the privilege of meeting and talking to the last queen of France. The new-born child was named after her, and I still possess the beautiful box (minus the bonbons) sent to me by the Godparents after the christening.

It may not be without interest to allow the mind to wander away for the moment from these domestic scenes, to go back some sixteen years to the stormy period when the Duchesse d'Orleans, mother of the Comte de Paris, stood in the midst of the revolution, "alone between a tomb and a throne." "She derived," says Lamartine, "from happiness but mourning; from royalty but a perspective view ;



## LAMARTINE

from maternity but cares. She was in every way equal to her destiny ; by beauty, by the soul, by tears." Her presence in the midst of the mob, her paleness, her children pressed to her heart, her imploring look, deeply affected Lamartine. We are told that during the crisis he had only to say, "Rise ! You are the widow of that Duke of Orleans, whose virtues and whose memory the people crown in you ! You are the innocents, and the victims of the throne's faults, the guests, and the suppliants of the people," to have turned the tide the other way.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious to think that Rudolph Lehmann was in Paris during this revolution, and, only a month after the flight of the royal family, was invited by Madame Lamartine to spend an evening at her house. He was invited, not on account of politics, but purely because he was an artist, for Madame had a passion for art, which, alas, failed to develop in her hands, notwithstanding all her fostering care. She was the only woman present. In his memoirs Rudolph Lehmann describes seeing a red cotton handkerchief with the President's portrait printed on it spread over the back of a settee in the middle of the room, "apparently a welcome token of his momentary popularity." Grateful mention was made by one of the guests of his having proposed and carried the declaration of the Republic at the Palais Bourbon, when Lamartine responded in the following words :—

"I was ill-disposed," he said, "on that morning. I had a cold and no voice, and on my way to the Chamber I was wavering as to my vote, when in the

<sup>1</sup> French Authors at Home. Vol. II.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

vestibule I was met by the widowed Duchesse d'Orleans, with her two sons, who had courageously remained behind while all the rest of the Royal family had fled. She implored me, with tears in her eyes, to use my influence for a declaration of a Régence, pending the majority of her eldest son, the Comte de Paris, but I would not, and could not, make any promise; and entering the house, I mounted the tribune, and—as by a sudden inspiration—proclaimed the Republic. It was, you know, carried with acclamation.”

A few years later, Rudolph Lehmann was again thrown with Lamartine, owing to the exhibition of his exquisite picture “Graziella,” in the Paris Salon, 1855. Rudolph’s friend, Fred Leighton (afterwards Lord Leighton, P.R.A.), had sat for Lamartine, who was represented reading his poems to Graziella, the fisher girl who died of love when he, Lamartine, left her. The picture was well hung and excited a great deal of attention. During its exhibition it drew from Lamartine the following letter to the artist :—

Mr. Rodolph Lehmann, à Rome.

Paris, June 25, 1855.

SIR,

I owe you the greatest service a writer with the pen can receive from a writer with the brush; that you have understood, felt, appreciated (*accueille*) one of his early inspirations, and have illustrated it, giving it the form, colour, and life of another art. Graziella was but a dream—you have made her a reality. When I say dream I speak metaphorically, for nothing in that episode of my life is imaginary

## “GRAZIELLA ”

but the names. I have no doubt that had you witnessed the impression produced upon me when I found myself personally represented in a memory thus awakened, you would have found yourself rewarded. You would have witnessed the power of your talent in my attitude and in my eyes. I return this morning to the Salon exclusively for your sake. Your brother will have told you that the impression, natural in myself, has been shared by a select and feeling public. An old connoisseur, very hard to please, said to me yesterday that in those rooms you were the Petrarch of the brush. Your fame will spread—poetry and love, if they do not always bring a fortune, bring at least glory and happiness to those who begin like you. I am poor, but I should greatly regret to see that picture pass into hands other than mine . . . . but what I shall always be happy to proclaim is the pleasure I owe you, and my gratitude joined to my admiration.

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

It is strange to find this “poet of the soul,” humbly pleading that he was poor. He had inherited wealth, and also had acquired riches through his wife, but died poor, impelled by social duties and philanthropy to be generous beyond his means.

Among the many incongruities of ordinary life it is not a little strange to find a member of our family even indirectly associated with this memorable epoch in French history. Again, that we should have been thrown at one time with Louis Blanc socially, and later find ourselves on the most friendly terms

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

professionally with the family whom he helped to drive from the throne of France !

With the present generation of the French royal family the sense of grief was over, but the glory of the past remained to tinge the future with undying hope. All around me stand many photographs given at various periods to my husband and myself. In the centre of one group is King Louis Philippe. There are also his brother, the Duc de Montpensier, and the Duchesse de Montpensier, the father and mother of the Comtesse de Paris. Unfortunately there are none of the Duc and Duchesse d'Orleans (the father and mother of the Comte de Paris), but there is a precious one of the old Queen Marie Amélie. The Duc and Duchesse de Chartres and their children at various stages are also represented, and the Duc and Duchesse d'Alençon with an infant. She was the unfortunate duchess who was burnt to death in the lamentable bazaar held in Paris a few years ago for some charity.

Later the groups are more grown up and include the present Duc d'Orleans and his three sisters, in 1883, each signed expressly for myself. When the exile was removed after the Franco-Prussian war, and France once more was opened to the royal family, we received many invitations to visit the Chateau d'Eu, but the opportunity never came till we happened to be visiting Paris during Easter in 1880. I find, however, from a letter (undated) written to my aunt that we must have spent a day with them at the Villa Julie, Cannes, previous to this. It states :—" We went to breakfast and found Dr. and Madame Henri Guéneau de Mussy there, the two



## THE COMTE DE PARIS

young princesses, Marie and Hélène (afterwards Duchesse d'Aosta), their governess, the secretary, the Duc de Penthièvre, an engineer of French and English railroads, and Miss Perpignan, lady-in-waiting to the Crown Princess of Prussia. I sat next the Comte de Paris, and was extremely interested to find myself discussing French politics with a man who at the will of Lamartine might have been the king. He was anxious to know what people in England said, so I simply told him what I heard in a casual way, and as the people had no particular interest in French politics, he was greatly interested in hearing their observations. Then he told me things not in the papers; for instance, that the Government had left the Duc de Joinville in active service in the navy because it would have been too dangerous to remove him as they had done the Duc de Chartres from the army. Then we spoke of the Château d'Eu and all that he had done through science and art to make the place delightful, and, he sadly remarked, 'now that we have made it so perfect to live in, we may be banished again any day; we cannot tell.'

"Two or three minutes later, when the melancholy fit had passed, he cordially invited us once more to the Château d'Eu, saying how convenient the trains were, and that I might shoot a wild boar in the forest, for 'the Comtesse herself had shot one the other day!'

"After *déjeuner* we strolled into the garden, where the Comte gathered a bouquet of camellias and anemones for me while I hunted about with the two young princesses for trap-door spiders' nests, which



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

they had not heard of before. Unfortunately there were none to be seen, but they intended to pursue the hunt out in the wilds where they were more likely to be found. We now took leave of our host and hostess, promising to return at four o'clock for the tea party expected to assemble at that time. When we did return the party was in full swing. We were ushered into the drawing-room with great ceremony to be laid hands on by the Comtesse, who forgot to be ceremonious on this state occasion, and amused everybody by the cordiality of her greeting.

"Presently she seized my arm and dragging me aside whispered, 'Do you see that creature over there in a blaze of red? Isn't she a fright? She comes from England to teach us how to dress. Did you ever see anything like it?' 'The creature' rejoiced in a brown wig, from which errant locks of white appeared. On the top of this a gorgeous hat with long feathers that fanned the air flamboyantly whenever she moved."

The great feature of the occasion was Gounod the composer. The engineer whom we had met at breakfast was the chief singer, and had the soft, cultivated voice of a professional. He and the Comtesse de Paris sang a duet, Gounod playing the accompaniment, after which he played the accompaniment for his daughter. In outlying corners a good deal of fun went on between the young princesses and the three young daughters of Lord Sudley, who in London lived at the corner opposite our house in Hertford Street. These three pretty children are now the Countess of Airlie, Marchioness of Salisbury, and Lady Esth  r Smith.

## THE CHÂTEAU D'EU

Not long after this (1880) the visit to the Château d'Eu came off, and a very pleasant time we had. There was no formal party to disturb the family arrangements, only a few gentlemen.

An English servant in the French royal livery was sent to the station to receive us, and on driving up to the Château we saw a group of servants awaiting our arrival at the door, and beyond them, in the hall, the Comte and Comtesse de Paris ready to greet us. They then led us along the corridor, which was lined on either side with interesting and amusing little pictures, to the Princess's private sitting-room, a perfect model of comfort and homeliness. Her easy-chair was placed near the window overlooking the garden, and beside it a little table draped with red and covered with innumerable pots containing jonquils and primroses from the woods. On another table close by were many photographs. Shrouded from common eyes, and seen only from the sanctity of her own easy-chair, was a beautiful likeness of her sister Mercedes, the young Queen of Spain, who died while yet a bride. The Spanish crown adorning the top of the frame warned off all intrusion. Large writing-tables gave the room a practical look, while easy-chairs, sofas, ladies' work, children's toys, newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets made it a centre towards which the family drew from every other quarter. The cabinets along one side of the wall contained a great many interesting orders and relics of the kings of France, and a boudoir adjoining had the furniture covered with brocades that had at various periods adorned the persons of

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French queens. Among other relics was the silver cradle presented to the Duchesse d'Orleans by the French people on the birth of her son, the Comte de Paris. In the midst of these touching relics of French history I would spend the evenings teaching Marie, the future Queen of Portugal, and Hélène, future Duchesse d'Aosta, how to make Tam o'Shanter's for their dolls !

No one could be thrown into intimate relations with the Comtesse de Paris without finding that away down in the depths of her character, under a surface of merriment and fun, lay a wealth of sentiment and fine feeling. When taking us a round of the children's rooms we noticed over every bed a portrait of Mercedes, with a bit of wedding cake and orange blossom attached. Before these she was speechless !

The forenoons were passed in rambles for the gentlemen and drives for myself with the Princess. When the four high-spirited ponies were brought round we had to watch our opportunity for jumping in, when the Comtesse would seize the ribbons and away we would go. "Are you frightened?" she would ask. "Not in the least," I would mendaciously assert, with terror fluttering in my heart !

The dinner hour was the only time when ceremony was observed. Being the only lady guest, I had to take my cue the first night from noting what others did. The room in which we assembled was next the dining-room. All the gentlemen were standing when we entered, so we did not venture to sit down as the Comte de Paris was present. When the Comtesse arrived she was in full evening dress, as

## THE CHÂTEAU D'EU

were the two princesses, but very simply attired. When dinner was announced the Comte de Paris stood near the door and himself did duty as Master of the Ceremonies, directing every one where to sit. I was desired to follow the Comtesse, and, being the only lady visitor, had the pleasure of sitting next His Royal Highness once more.

After dinner it was the habit of the princess to carry her daughters off to her own bedroom for quiet reading and prayers, after which they came back to the sweet, easy domestic life of the sitting-room and 'Tam o'Shanters till bedtime.

One evening we all strolled off to see the kennels, which were beautifully arranged. Her Royal Highness alone ventured in among the hounds with a whip for self-protection, and was soon in the thick of a raging, howling storm of dogs all leaping round about her.

On our way back she suddenly disappeared into the bushes, and presently emerged carrying a little fox cub which she thrust into my arms saying, "There, you may take that home with you if you like!" As I could not say I exactly "liked," and did not see my way to accommodating the animal in Mayfair, she considerately took it back to its natal earth.

The morning of our departure the Comte determined we should see the basement of the Château. We had already been deeply impressed with the picture galleries, which contained the collection of the Grand Mademoiselle, and with all the winding staircases and mazes in which we frequently lost our way; but what lay underneath all this proved still



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

more bewildering. Looking back mentally over the twenty-three years that have fled, I can dimly see a series of kitchens with *chefs* in paper caps and everything culinary perfect about them. Miles of vaults, where a thousand soldiers could be stowed, other vaults where Guizot, Minister for Foreign Affairs, sat at work with his secretaries during the reign of the last king, and yet other vaults containing the engines that sent hot air into every room, and hot water to the various bathrooms and chambers.

To describe all we did and saw would be impossible within the limits of my story ; it is sufficient to say we felt carried away in a stream of French history so vivid that the intervening years seemed lost and the present to be swallowed up in the past.



### CHAPTER III

WHILE private practice was thus opening up to us a charmed life, and affording us many of the privileges that radiate from royal circles and carry with them an open sesame to other fields, there remained the seamy side of professional life which seemed to hold the scales even between shadow and sunshine.

In the first year of my husband's work at King's College Hospital the murmurings of dissatisfaction concerning hospitals generally were just beginning to be heard. Nothing was known of the true *modus vivendi* of disease ; all was ephemeral and empirical. In these days we did not understand *scientific* cleanliness—that is, cleanliness under the surface, beyond the range of vision, that all-important local cleanliness which may even be maintained in the midst of foul surroundings. Neither did we know whence disease came, nor what disease was *au fond*. Hospital diseases were dreaded, but accepted as inevitable.

With the exception of small-pox, all manner of infectious cases were taken into the general medical wards. Good ventilation through open windows and not overcrowding the wards were considered sufficient security against the spread of infection. In many of the London hospitals the nurses had to scrub the floors, but at King's the patients who were

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

sufficiently convalescent were made to get up at four or five in the morning to perform this office. In the middle of the building, rising from the basement to the top, was the lift, which *en route* stopped at the door of each long ward to deliver the dinners or whatever might be required from below.

The Nightingale ward for maternity cases was on the top floor above one of the general wards. Further down was the great surgical ward of which Sir William Fergusson had charge, and below was the *post-mortem* room. Everything would go well for a season. Then, for some reason not understood, joy would be turned into sadness, the prevailing peace would be broken, and the contented faces of one day would the next be "scarred with the crooked autograph of pain." One significant fact stood out like the index finger on a sign-post, pointing to the door where the lift came up as the place of danger, for the women on the top floor who lay nearest that door were invariably the first stricken with blood-poisoning.

When these outbreaks occurred the only remedy known was to close the ward for three months, and thoroughly disinfect before opening it again.

This unhappy state of things was a source of much affliction to my husband, who in 1867 addressed a letter to the Council after communicating with Miss Nightingale on the subject. The Nightingale ward was consequently closed, and it was arranged that the poor women should henceforth be attended in their own poor houses, and in this way only was the mortality reduced.

The mortality in hospitals generally at this period

## HOSPITALS IN THE SIXTIES

was so high that a commission was appointed by the Privy Council to report on the sanitary condition of the hospitals of the United Kingdom. In reading this report by the light of the present day it is curious to see how the greatest experts the Government could command at that time were only groping in the dark, like everyone else. As the year 1863 when this report was issued is a long way off, and might indeed be centuries off, I shall quote one or two passages from it<sup>1</sup> for the sake of history. "In Paris hospitals are government establishments, consequently every one who is poor enough and sick enough to require admission is sent by a public officer into any one of the hospitals in which there may happen to be a vacant bed. Failing vacant beds, additional beds would be placed in any hospitals that the central administration might choose. The hospitals are bound to receive all cases of urgency, hence the crowding in of beds containing acute medical and acute surgical cases all mixed together.

"In London matters are different. There hospitals are private institutions supported by voluntary contributors or governors, who alone can give letters of admission. The number of beds are fixed solely according to the salubrity or convenience of the hospital, and not by the wants of the district!"

They (the commissioners) considered that the sanitary defects of hospitals were not the sole cause, probably not even the immediate cause,

<sup>1</sup> Report of Dr. Bristowe and Mr. Timothy Holmes on the Hospitals of the United Kingdom, 1863.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

of "complications," or so-called "hospital diseases," because "where they became endemic there must be (not merely to allow of their spreading, but in order to *beget* them) an accumulation of open sores producing what is termed a "*traumatic atmosphere*."

In seeking explanations they considered that "complications did not necessarily indicate unhealthiness in hospitals, because the attack of *phagedæna* (ulcers) might have been determined by the constitution of the patient; the occurrence of *pyæmia* might have been the natural sequence of the particular disease under which the patient was labouring; or the attack of erysipelas might have supervened on exposure to the draughts which are so common in our hospital wards."

Consequently the separation of erysipelas, pyæmia, phagedæna into wards apart was considered quite unnecessary! They further advocated the mixing of medical and surgical cases in the same wards, and regretted the formation of "operation wards," as it was simply concentrating the mischief arising from acutely suppurating wounds! Still, they were willing to admit that their objections were theoretical, as "no particular harm had been found to follow the custom!"

While the commission admitted that nurses ran certain risks from infection, and "not unfrequently fell victims," still they believed the same thing might happen if the nursing were performed in the open air on the summit of a mountain!

Notwithstanding this report, that could recognize no immediate connection between infected walls and mortality, and imagined that all difficulties could be



## HOSPITALS. IN THE SIXTIES

overcome with good ventilation and improved sanitary measures, there were nevertheless some physicians and also surgeons who felt that beyond all this lay some mysterious and subtle source of mischief. Among those were Sir James Simpson and my husband, who were always on the alert to gather facts and make observations for themselves. The decisive closing of the maternity ward at King's, and consequent reduction of the death-rate, was one striking fact, for it proved that the women did better in their poor, dirty, unventilated, insanitary dwellings than amidst the comforts and luxuries of the hospital.

It was also found that in Paris the leading surgeons had to hire lodgings outside the hospital for their capital operations, as they did not dare to perform them within the walls !

The following letter, addressed to my husband by Sir James Simpson, shows the active part he was taking in pursuit of knowledge still felt to be wanting :—

52, Queen Street,  
Edinburgh,  
February 3rd, 1869.

MY DEAR DR.,

Are there *published* annual reports—with accounts of the results of the operations—of King's College Hospital like those of Bartholomew's, St. Thomas' &c. ? If so, I should feel deeply obliged by your forwarding a set. Or if you have a superintendent or registrar at the hospital would he kindly send to me a notice, for the last few years, of the amputations of the thigh, leg, arm, and forearm (no joint



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

amputations), and their results? I have got returns from the registrars of most of the London hospitals, and those of Edinburgh and Glasgow, &c., filled up as in the enclosed printed schedule.

Do I dream or not as to hearing you state that since your obstetric ward was closed you had reason to suspect that its air might have been deteriorated from the dissecting-room being placed two or three stories below? We are to have a discussion on maternities next week at our Obstetrie Society, and I have promised to introduce the subject.

Love to the Doctora and all the little Doctoroids.

Yours,

J. Y. SIMPSON.

Now this very year, 1869 (the date of Sir James' letter), was a memorable one, as it was the year in which the great reformer, Professor Lister, left Glasgow and was appointed to the chair of surgery in the Edinburgh University, and consequently became a colleague of Sir James Simpson about eight months after the above letter was written.

It is painful in these days to reflect how slow was the spread of knowledge so vital to the interests of the whole human race. The key had already been found that opened the portals, yet the way was not smooth, the light was not clear, and those whom it most concerned were afraid to enter. It is interesting, however, to know that the two men, Professors Lister and Simpson, who have done so much to alleviate pain and avert death in their respective callings, were colleagues at this time in the University of Edinburgh. Colleagues they were not



Je Professor!



## SIR JAMES SIMPSON

destined to remain long, for the following year our beloved friend, Sir James, with all his faculties alert, succumbed to *angina pectoris* after some weeks of suffering. He therefore did not live to see the problem fully solved which kept him rushing about to all the great cities in quest of the longed-for knowledge concerning the mysteries of hospital *complications*.

It so happened that in March of this year I had the doubtful pleasure of crossing the Channel with him on a boisterous day *en route* to Paris, whither on hospital inquiry he was bent, and where he intended to join his friend, Mr. Pender (later Sir John, M.P.), at the Hotel du Louvre. In a letter to my husband at the time, I see that I suffered considerably from his devoted attentions on board. When he saw me growing pale he took a box of chloroform pills from his pocket, and, longing for a chance of trying an experiment, he said, "Take a pill, darling." As I could not swallow it without water, he sent his son Magnus downstairs to fetch some; then through the winds and the waves came the voice of the charmer, "Swallow one now, dear," and down it went.

Alas, that terrible pill!

## CHAPTER IV

To pick up the thread of our story again we must go back from the end of this decade to the beginning, to see how the change came about that led the medical world from darkness into light.

It was in Paris; the year 1860, when Louis Pasteur was awarded the prize for Experimental Physiology by the French Académie. He had not studied medicine, but among the millions of human beings the world contained there was just this one man who had struck the right vein in the course of his chemical studies; brushed aside all obscurities; disposed of false theories concerning spontaneous generation; and determined for ever the true and living cause of disease, that secret which had been withheld from all doctors throughout all the ages of the world's history.

On receiving this prize from the Académie he wrote to his father confiding the news, and I here venture to give the following passage from his letter:—

“God grant that by my persevering labours I may bring a little stone to the frail and ill-assured edifice of our knowledge of those deep mysteries of life and death, where all our intellects have so lamentably failed.”

Without laying claim to be the first discoverer of



## PASTEUR

germs in connection with disease, for there had been various forecasts from early times, he was the first to recognize the vast importance of micro-organisms<sup>1</sup> in the economy of Nature, and the first to study and work out their true life-history, and bearing on the things round about us.

Great though his discoveries were, and decisive though they proved, they burst upon the world too suddenly to find a welcome. They were too revolutionary to be allowed to pass unhindered, and so, while he was imprisoned within a cordon of opposition which he had strenuously to meet, the dance of death went on, and the world was still left to reap the penalties of universal ignorance.

In considering these complex studies it is interesting to follow him. At one moment he is in his little attic at the Ecole Normale, where he is a Professor of Chemistry in receipt of a modest salary from the Government. Here he has at his own expense extemporized a brewer's vat for his researches on yeasts. Through the microscope he watches the life history of the living cells<sup>2</sup> which convert the brewer's wort into the pure beverage we call ale. The change that takes place is a chemical one, and the picture now before us is that of a human chemist watching the work of Nature's chemists in a world of their own, many unsuspected by the mind of man, and all unseen by the naked eye.

It was a wonderful study, for the more it was pursued the more was the fact brought home to him

<sup>1</sup> Pasteur's word for bacteria in the early days.

<sup>2</sup> The *Saccharomyces cerevisiæ*.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

that it was not the history of beer-brewing alone that he was watching, but the life history of disease. It was a world within a world, alive with beings working out their own independent lives, seeking their own particular nourishment, multiplying themselves, and living or dying according to circumstances favouring their life or death.

Under the microscope he saw how the yeast cells flourish on the sugar they find in the barley until it is consumed, but in consuming this element other elements are set free which are destructive to their life. They die just when their work is finished, leaving us the product of their existence in the pure fermented ale.

Up to this point all is well for the brewer, but in the course of a short time the ale becomes cloudy and sour. All was mystery till Pasteur explained that in nature the ale is simply a putrescible material, and that the living germs which cause putrescence are everywhere in the air round about us. They hang on the walls of the brewery ready to attack the beer. They are on the hand of the brewer when he plunges it into the brew to feel the temperature, and accordingly he directly infects the beer with disease. Having thus studied the progress of the desirable organisms—those of yeast, and the insidious advent of the undesirable that cause disease—he was further bent on proving to his opponents that in high cold latitudes the air is germless, and therefore incapable of decomposing or altering putrescible things. Hence at another period we find him climbing the Montanvert at the peril of his life. He had to spend the night on the

## PASTEUR'S EXPERIMENTS

mountain in a hut open to wind and rain, and sleep with his culture flasks beside him. He threaded his way along precipices, his mule in front bearing the precious burden, and regardless of self, supported the case along the ice-riven ridges to prevent it shaking.

And what is this mysterious work going on now that he has reached the still frozen air of the *mer de glace*, where no germ-laden dust from the peopled earth can reach him? It is very simple. All that Pasteur does is to raise one by one his little glass flasks beyond reach of his breath, then he nips off the long, twisted end of the tubes, leaving the contents exposed to the air for a few seconds. With the aid of a spirit lamp he hermetically closes them again. Within the flasks is a putrescible material which has been carefully prepared in the laboratory. It consists of meat jelly, or gelatine which has been rendered free from all living germs by heating, and so long as it is preserved from germ-laden air it will remain clear and pure for ever.

The flasks which we have so carefully followed have now been opened and exposed to the Alpine air at a temperature inimical to the vitality of germs. No harm comes, no alteration takes place, and the theory of his opponents that decomposition is due to the *spontaneous generation* of life is crushed for ever.

In this new world of the invisible the laws are the same as in the visible, in that all life springs from previous life, as the rose from the rose, and man from man.

Pasteur, full of triumph, hastened to meet his

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

antagonists at the Académie, in the brewery, or among the ripening grapes in the wine-growing countries. While thus pursuing his labours he was compelled, through opposition, to lead a life of persecution amounting to martyrdom, for men of science, still wedded to preconceived ideas, could not, or would not, easily relinquish them. In March, 1863, he told the Emperor Napoleon III., who always took a deep interest in his work, that "his ambition was to arrive at the knowledge of the causes of putrid and contagious diseases."

Still, in 1863 these tidings of joy had not reached the various medical schools, nor spread beyond the battle-grounds of contention, so suffering and death continued to run riot in our costly sanctuaries of disease.

But to return to Pasteur's letter to his father. Surely no prayer that was ever breathed met with a more direct answer; for it seemed to be wafted through the air, till it germinated in the one brain prepared by heredity, circumstances, and scientific culture to receive it. Lister, as we all now know, was the first medical apostle who believed in the word of Pasteur; and understanding the full significance of his researches, "*Sur les corpuscles organisés qui existent dans l'atmosphère*," applied them to surgery.

In following Pasteur, his master henceforth, he had to share with him the burden of conflict and opposition. But together—as was truly said some years later—they "formed a brotherhood of science labouring to diminish the sorrows of humanity."

Having followed Pasteur in some of his wander-



## LISTER

ings after truth, we may now transport ourselves to Glasgow to see what Lister is doing there.

We can imagine him sitting in his study, reading with close attention Pasteur's writings on fermentation and spontaneous generation. He quickly recognizes the analogy between the open wounds in human flesh, and all other putrescible material, when exposed to the germ-laden air. The awful fact comes home to him, that in common with the brewer, he himself is the carrier of disease! The veil is lifted. He sees how dangers to life have arisen in the course of his surgical practice. Hitherto he knew not whence the stroke came. Now it was revealed to him. He found a friend in his father-in-law, Professor Syme, who encouraged him to discover the ways and means of best applying the knowledge to surgery. With his little knot of students he tried his first antiseptics with compound fractures in 1865. Going cautiously along the new line of treatment, he watched the results with keen intensity, and modified, altered, or proceeded at discretion.

Notwithstanding the great success attending even his earliest efforts, opposition was keen. Still he remained content with his little band of students, who were quick to see the difference between the old and new methods, and were ready to adopt the principles. Lister's first publication on the subject appeared in the "Lancet" in March, 1867, and his first paper on "On the Antiseptic Principle in Surgery" was read in the same year at the Dublin meeting of the British Medical Association. But beyond his own trusty little band of disciples, and a



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

few stray foreigners, the news fell still-born, for his Glasgow colleagues passed by on the other side !

In 1869 he left Glasgow, as I have already mentioned, for the Chair of Surgery in Edinburgh, and was rejoiced to find that his new colleagues, with one exception, were ready to support him in the great revolution.

From this time the good seed seems to have taken root in various parts of the Continent, the first place being Copenhagen, through Saxtorph, a surgeon who was sufficiently enlightened to visit Lister's wards year after year in Glasgow and Edinburgh, in order to follow the progress and adopt the new methods at home.

Another disciple was Lucas Championnière, of Paris, who visited Lister's clinique in the early days at Glasgow, and at once appreciated the full importance of the new methods. Though then quite a young man, and without hospital wards, he held great influence through persistent advocacy of the practice in a journal he edited ("Journal de Médecine et de Chirurgie pratiques") and by continual effort in that way at length induced the French surgeons, one after another, to take the matter up.

Meanwhile Lister was bringing himself more closely into contact with Pasteur's work, and was carrying on independent researches in bacteriology, when the Franco-German war was declared. He consequently published an article on "A method of antiseptic treatment applicable to wounded soldiers in the present war," in the "British Medical Journal." But, alas, there was no organization, and

## “SPONTANEOUS GENERATION”

it occurred to no one in France during the first battles to adopt the new treatment. Still, all was not lost, for later the surgeons of the Anglo-American ambulances at Bazeilles, notwithstanding difficulties and working under fire, managed to Listerize wounds with great success, and saved thousands of human lives.

As a result of these researches, hospital “complications” were explained. Thus, not long after Sir James Simpson was in his grave, the appalling mortality in hospitals was understood, and maternity wards in general hospitals were found to be impossible.

Looking back to these early days it seems a thousand years ago since I heard a voice at a London dinner party addressing me in a cheerful and easy way with these words, “What have you to say to this great question of spontaneous generation?” The voice was that of Lyon Playfair, who was sitting next to me, and our host was Mr. Erichsen (later Sir John), the leading surgeon of University College Hospital.

Now the words “spontaneous generation” had occasionally passed across the firmament of my mind, but, like Friends in Council, had conveyed nothing. They were mere words, without the power to illuminate the darker recesses of my brain. I simply thought my friend and former foe was having one of his little jokes, so turning upon him a look of withering scorn, I replied, “No, no, Lyon, it won’t do this time, you had better ask the lady on your other side,” which he immediately proceeded to do, and with equal success! I little realized the fierce

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

battle that was raging round this little joke, and that it was destined after all to reach the dark corners of my mind, and spring forth everywhere a living reality to carry light along all the currents of medical and surgical life.

## CHAPTER V

WHILE my husband was deeply engaged with his hospital work and all the anxieties it entailed, I was able to resume my own hospital duties, which had been dropped during the year of our sorrows. My experiences were somewhat different to his, for my patients were all children, and my hospital a kind little home which has since developed into the Sick Children's Hospital of vast dimensions in Great Ormond Street. We were too humble in these days to aspire to a Lady Superintendent, but the head nurse was appointed house-keeper, and so long as the hospital was simply a Home the arrangements did very well. And a delightful old-fashioned house it was, with its wide square oak staircase, and spacious rooms, where the erstwhile owner, Dr. Mead, of Queen Anne celebrity, must have held many consultations with the beaux and belles and courtiers of long ago.

When I first began my hospital duties my twin was alive, and we formed at the request of Dr. West, the founder, two of a group of some half-dozen ladies who undertook to be official visitors during alternate months, or according to our own convenience. All comments, complaints, or suggestions, had to be entered in a book for which we each had a key, and in order to encourage strict

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

confidence the only other person who was permitted to have a key was the secretary, who brought the book before the committee. Although we revelled in the secrecy of the locked book, it turned out that we were all on such good and perfectly frank terms with the nurses that they knew just as well what was in that book as we did, and that nothing in the shape of a serious complaint ever came out of it. Everything was pleasantly and easily managed. We never felt we had so many bairns that we did not know what to do, although we established a crèche, and consequently had a room full of little day boarders. When the children were sufficiently convalescent we gathered them into little classes and gave them lessons—for it was before the days of compulsory education.

There was something pathetic in the good behaviour of the children, for although they were suffering from all manner of diseases, and painful affections, rarely a cry was heard. Even when the dressers or doctors would come round, and hurting was more or less unavoidable, they would give a smile in response to the cheery "Billy" or "Tommy" or whatever might be the pet name with which the doctors greeted them.

In these days this was the only Sick Children's Hospital in London. In most of the general hospitals children were scattered among the wards, so that the teaching of children's diseases was a work of supererogation so far as method and specializing was concerned. As it was my husband's duty at King's College Hospital to give his students instruction on the diseases of childhood, he found it



## THE PANTIA RALLI WARD

extremely difficult and unsatisfactory to fulfil this duty simply in the lecture room without a ward for clinical instruction. Fortunately he got over the difficulty in an unexpected way through the beneficence of Mr. Peter Ralli. While in attendance on his wife, it so happened that these two gentlemen were thrown a good deal together, and the conversation turned naturally enough on the difficulty of teaching students how to deal with sick children when they had no opportunity of observing them. The result of this talk was the foundation of the Sick Children's ward at King's College Hospital now known as the Pantia Ralli ward, established in memory of Mr. Peter Ralli's father.

Apart from the two great events, the closing of the Nightingale ward and the opening of the Pantia Ralli, matters were going on much as they had ever done at our hospital. While Edinburgh, Germany, France and Denmark had adopted Listerian methods, King's, in common with the other London hospitals, stood still. It was not until the year 1877 that an opportunity was afforded of making a change in the staff. My husband, who had kept himself *au fait* with Lister's work, and who took the deepest interest in his bacteriological researches, was extremely anxious to induce him to accept the chair of clinical surgery now offered him by the Council. Before me lies a mass of correspondence on the subject, most of the letters being Lister's replies to Dr. Priestley, who was asked by the Council to negotiate. It is curious to recall the many difficulties that arose, and pleasant to remember how they gradually subsided and finally vanished before the

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

welcome presence of the new master. At one moment when all seemed lost we telegraphed to Lister that he must breakfast with us next morning if possible, to meet some members of the Council. He consequently started off that night, came to a decision at our breakfast table next morning, and forthwith made arrangements for the teaching of antiseptic surgery at King's, which led to the ultimate adoption of his principles throughout all the hospitals of the kingdom.

## CHAPTER VI

WHILE medical politics, education, and hospital management never ceased during the entire course of his life to occupy my husband's attention, he was able during leisure hours and holidays to enjoy the many privileges with which the pathways of medicine are so liberally strewn. At an early period, Sir Charles Locock, at the Park Lane corner of our street, and Dr. Arthur Farre, at No. 12, both in full practice within court circles, seemed to regard him as their natural successor. Beyond the professional work a pleasant intimacy was established, and I have a vivid recollection of Sir Charles having what is styled a "medical" dinner party at his house one night, when my husband riveted the attention of the company by giving them the riddle of the three-pint can to solve. It was this : A girl is sent to the well with a three-pint can, and a five-pint can, and is told to bring four pints of water. How is it done ?

Before long the leading physicians of London were lost in thought over the profound problem. Some were at work with pencils on their linen cuffs, others were elaborating on the back of their menus, when it dawned on my husband that he had forgotten the answer. He felt there was no time to be lost, matters were getting serious ; there was nothing for it but to send over to me for the answer. Accord-

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

ingly somewhere towards midnight I was aroused out of my first sleep to take in a letter marked "urgent." Messages coming to our house at all hours of the night caused no surprise; the house was accustomed to them, but on this occasion it was not a patient who was ill, but an assembly of doctors who were destined to spend the night, if necessary, at the other end of the street in trying to find out how that girl contrived to get four pints of water out of the three-pint can and the five-pint can.

I recognized at once the urgency of the case, but it took me some precious moments to clear my brain of sleep before I could send the answer. Mercifully it arrived in time to save the situation and my husband's reputation among his brethren.

Many of the London doctors were men of artistic culture, for instance, Sir Francis Seymour Haden, the celebrated etcher, Sir Felix Semon, well known as a musician, Dr. Roberts, who sang delightfully, Dr. Habershon, who with his wife softened the hours of suffering to Mr. Gladstone with their music during his last days. Sir Henry Thompson was an admirable painter, and his wife, Kate Loder, who used to play before the Queen and Prince Consort in their early days, was a source of delight to her friends. Lady Semon, Lady Paget and Lady Haden were no less gifted as musicians of a high class. These gifts added greatly to the charm of medical social life and "medical" entertainments.

Again Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes and Dr. Weir Mitchell, across the mill pond, were delighting the world with their novels, so that medicine as a profession could hold its own anywhere in the realms of

## MEDICAL SOCIETY

culture. The days of the barber-surgeon were over, and since the army medical department has been placed on a better footing and become "Royal" it is no longer regarded as a profession unworthy the sons of gentlemen. In Italy and other places abroad members of the medical profession fill some of the highest posts in the state, while we have gone so far as to raise Sir Joseph Lister to the peerage.

There was always an amusing side of medical life to be found in the various Congresses that meet annually for the discussion of new discoveries, and subjects that have developed or advanced since the previous meeting. There are the British Medical Association meetings, the International Medical Congresses, hygiene and demography, the Sanitary Institute annual meeting, &c.

It was at the International Medical Congress that we met Pasteur for the first time. It was held in London, August 3rd, 1882. Every one was inquiring a day or two before the meeting whether he had arrived. No one knew. I hunted up Dr. Henri Gueneau de Mussy, who had recently seen him in Paris, to ask what had become of Pasteur. He did not know, but gave me the address of his lodgings in Clarges Street, or one of the streets off Piccadilly. Meanwhile a pile of letters were lying at the bureau addressed to Pasteur, but no one had called for them. The day arrived, and no one had seen Pasteur till he entered St. James' Hall to attend the opening meeting. One of the stewards was leading him to the place reserved for him on the platform when he was recognized, and immediately cheers rang through the hall. Perfectly unconscious that



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

the applause was meant for him, he turned to his son and son-in-law, and said with a little uneasiness: "It is no doubt the Prince of Wales arriving, I ought to have come a little sooner." Sir James Paget, the President, explained that he was the person being cheered, and the noise was so great he had to rise and bow to the huge assembly.

My husband, having now been introduced to Pasteur, it was arranged that we should call at his lodgings, and drive him to a garden party at Sir Spencer Wells' house at Hampstead later in the afternoon. I had longed to see the great man with whose work I was familiar. While sitting in the carriage waiting for him, the door opened, and out came Pasteur limping along, with his son-in-law, Vallery Radot, in close attendance, trying all the time to get him into his great-coat. There was no introduction, no ceremony; Pasteur, the least self-conscious man in the world, took his seat beside me, while Radot and my husband sat opposite, all feeling as if we had known each other all our lives. During our drive I told him of my recent amateur efforts at inoculating with vaccine lymph our sporting dogs in Scotland against distemper which had broken out in the kennels. I had flattered myself it had done some good in arresting the spread of the disease. "Ah!" said Pasteur, "and the control experiment?" The idea of a "control," in other words the "proof," had never dawned on my mind, and without that it fell to the ground in the estimation of the great experimentalist. After this we saw a good deal of the Pasteurs, who seemed to look to us for assistance in various ways as we lived so near. It was in this way

## COPENHAGEN

a friendship was begun which lasted till the end of Pasteur's life. The family friendship still continues, and is likely to continue so long as any members of the two families are left.

Two years later, on August 10th, 1884, another congress took us off in a body to Copenhagen. The weather was hot, and the journey trying, as there was no time—owing to the crowd—to get breakfast at Flushing before starting for Hamburg. I had a tea-basket with me and doled out cups of very welcome tea among my friends. Sir William Gull always pinned his faith on cold plum-pudding, which he said had a *staying* effect when you wanted to *get on*. He gave me some in exchange for the cup of tea, so that we managed to stave off actual starvation until we reached *déjeuner* proper further along the line. At Hamburg we fell in with the Pagets. At the end of our journey the arrangements made for our reception were so perfect that we had no trouble about custom house, carriages or lodgings; but at one or two places *en route* one of the doctors, who had some interesting specimens in his portmanteau, got himself into constant trouble as a “suspect” travelling under cover of the congress!

The letter I wrote at the time to my aunt, Mrs. Wills, gives some idea of the manner in which doctors contrive to blend science with amusement on these occasions.

“August 15th, '84, Copenhagen.

“I am so utterly fatigued with my scientific dissipations that I have to write this lying down,

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

but it is better to do it so than miss the opportunity, such as it is, of giving you a screed. Such a week of it we have had ! The weather all the time being delightful. The congress was opened by the King and Queen on Monday last. They are the youngest looking people to have grown-up grandchildren I ever saw. The mother speaks well for our Princess, for she is slim and very bright, as well as young-looking.

“ 16th. A fresh start as I was too tired to go on.

“ Well, dear Aunty, the ovation we have received has surpassed anything our wildest dreams suggested. The whole of Denmark has risen to receive us. The Government voted £1,500 towards the expenses, and the railways and steamships are all at our service during the congress. On Monday we are to go over to Götenborg, in Sweden, on board a beautiful steamer as guests of the company. The whole thing is magnificent, for it is a whole people receiving us for the sake of national honour. The Danish doctors have organized the sections and meetings admirably and have taken infinite trouble to bring together everything of interest to the professors. Then the wives have formed a committee to meet the ladies of the congress every morning at the big hotel, to place themselves at our service and organize all the pleasures and doings of the day. They speak all languages amongst them, and English as if they had been educated in England, although they have never even been there. They formed an excursion to Kronsborg for the ladies, and off we sailed a hundred and twenty strong in a ship with all the colours flying, to a lovely sea-bathing place

## COPENHAGEN

on the coast, where a superb banquet was awaiting us in a beautiful music-hall built of wood among the trees. We had just enough of gentlemen styling themselves marshals to manage the rough work and give us welcome in pretty and most gallant little speeches. One French lady got up to return thanks, then felt so timid that she thought she would sit down again, but the marshal sitting next to her gave her encouragement and his hand, which she kept squeezing until her speech was done. I proposed 'prosperity to Denmark,' and William returned thanks for the English ladies, all being too shamefully timid to do it for themselves. After lunch ten or twelve carriages were ready to drive us through the forest, which is like Fontainebleau, and then our ship came round for us and took us home after a most delightful day.

"The place where we landed was all *en fête* for a prodigious banquet to be given to the doctors at five o'clock that afternoon. It was now a quarter past four, and thousands of people were lining the docks, which were kept clear by the police. As no hall was large enough to dine 1,200, they had built a temporary dining-room on one of the docks, the front all being glass, and the effect that of floating on the sea with the ships all sailing by. By the time the guests began to arrive every house-top was covered with people cheering and waving their handkerchiefs and caps. After the banquet was over numerous barges, gaily decorated, came up to carry the doctors off to the Tivoli gardens, where the ladies awaited them for the display of fireworks. The crowd at the landing-place was so dense that



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

we could not get near, but gradually we all came together and had a most amusing time of it. All sorts of games were going on, a pantomime which was very good, tobogganing by machinery of a most violent kind *up* as well as down hill, a small carriage of ancient times driven by a boy in fine livery, pig-tail and all, boats supposed to be at sea in a storm, balloons, &c. It was like one of the royal *fêtes* of old.

“The other night we dined with one of the Danish doctors, and that interested me very much. Each person had about ten wine-glasses, and the first wine served was old port. I thought of Mrs. Linton. The dinner was delightfully cooked quite in French style. After dinner the doctor's sister, who keeps house for him, was exceedingly anxious to know what we thought of it, and was far too simple and candid not to confess how all the neighbours had insisted on contributing something, silver, flowers, china, which accounted for the alarming magnificence. You cannot think how kind-hearted and simple they are. This Miss Lowitz has taken a fancy to me and says she will weep when we part. Her brother is a very clever man. Yesterday I spent a couple of hours with them alone, and he showed me his photograph book, every ‘carte’ having a history. Among many pretty women there was a very ugly man whom he described as the baddest man he ever knew. He was the janitor at the college and had charge of the dissecting-room, and was so given to drink that he drank the spirits in which the *dead bodies* were kept. That is ghastly enough, but what follows is more so. The professor complained of the room not being



## COPENHAGEN

cleaned, and repeated sternly that 'to-morrow the floor *must* be washed.' To-morrow came, and the man was found suspended by the neck in the lift that carried up the bodies, and on his breast was pinned a piece of paper with these words : 'the floor is not washed !' No more ; he was dead.

" Yesterday my Roman friend, Tommasi Crudeli, showed his microscopes and drawings of malaria. I went to see them, and so did many foreigners, and the joke was that while Tommasi explained things to the Germans and French he made me demonstrate to the English, which was great fun. He has now engaged me as his assistant for the next Congress.

" It would be quite impossible to tell you everything that we have seen and done in a week. The place itself reminds me of Edinburgh, with the broad handsome streets paved with stone. The language is like broad Scotch and German mixed up together. The English Minister and his wife, the Hon. Mrs. Vivian, have been very kind to us, offering us rooms at the embassy and asking us to spend a few days with them in the country. We had letters to them from Lord Granville and Lady Boughton. The first secretary, Mr. Gosling, is a charming fellow, and has two remarkably handsome daughters. We lunched there yesterday. Sir Bruce Seton introduced us to him. Then Mr. Raikes, the under secretary, was at Cambridge with Bob and the Lehmanns, and has also been very friendly. The Vivians gave us a garden party, and invited the most distinguished of the Congress. Pasteur and his wife and family receive great honour.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

“ 17th.—Last night we wound up the proceedings with a ball, the doctors dancing wildly. We sat in a box above and looked down upon the most amusing scene. In order to clear the ground for the dancing the marshals—decked in Danish scarves—joined hands in a long line and went running merrily forward, driving all before them. As they proceeded the couples all bounded into the space behind and danced really like mad creatures, for the music was so quick they could not help themselves. Professor von Esmarek (who married Prince Christian’s sister) danced tremendously, although he is grey and the gravest of the grave to look at. He was one of my pupils over the microscopes.”

After a most enjoyable and interesting week we went forth on our travels to Stockholm, Helsingfors, St. Petersburg, and Moscow, thence home by the German Bads.

Lord Granville, who was then Minister for Foreign Affairs, had kindly given us private introductions to the Embassies, and as we had met the doctors of these various places at the Congress, they had arranged to show us everything we desired to see in the way of hospitals.

Stockholm we found a most charming place, and one of the most beautiful in the world. Life was made extremely pleasant to us socially, and there was an endless interest to be found in the marvellous museums and antiquities. A great feature of the place is going excursions up the river, and one day we set off to visit the king’s palace and grounds, which was one of the things for tourists to do. It did not seem to matter in the least that their

## THE KING OF SWEDEN

Majesties the king and queen were there in residence ; the grounds were open to all. On board the boat there happened to be one of the royal princes going home with his tutor, and as my husband had only the previous night been introduced to the latter, they fraternized at once. When rippling along on this sunny day my husband greatly interested the tutor by telling him how we came to be presented to the king at a garden-party at Marlborough House three weeks previously. About an hour later, while resting in the grounds, we observed a servant of the palace hunting eagerly about till he came up to us, and finding we were the people of his quest, delivered a message from his Majesty to say he desired to receive us.

When we were ushered into his presence by one of the equerries he greeted us with the utmost cordiality, and expressed great disappointment that we had not brought our daughter (now Flora Dugdale), after whom he made special inquiries. He also expressed regret that the queen had just gone out for her drive. After some interesting conversation, and telling him all about the Congress at Copenhagen, he mentioned that there was a Congress of Lawyers going on at Stockholm, and he expected to entertain 700 of them at the palace that evening. "Come," he said in a most pleasant way, rising from his chair, "let us go and see how they are getting on with the preparations ; I am sure you would like to see the pictures." So away we were taken, through lovely rooms and endless galleries, having our attention drawn to everything of special interest by our most charming and enlightened

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

cicerone. Upstairs long rooms were being laid out for the refreshments, and it was amusing to see that as the king entered by one door the menials respectfully retired by another. More than an hour passed before we took leave of the king, who desired kind messages to our daughter, and sent us off rejoicing under the gracious affability he had shown us.

When we reached Helsingfors a few days later it was getting dark, but the chief physician of the great hospital was awaiting our arrival at the station, and after escorting us to our hotel, where we dined, he took us off in a drosky over bone-splitting roads till we reached the object of our visit. Here we met with the first of various surprises awaiting us, the surprise now being to find in humble little Finland a hospital far in advance of anything we could show within our own proud British Isles.

In the way of teaching everything was as perfect as modern principles could make it; the treatment was strictly Listerian, and the laws of sanitation admirably carried out. By the time we visited the wards it was nearly midnight, and it was curious in the dim light to see the women sleeping on plank beds, showing the clear outline of their figures as they lay, without any of the adjuncts of luxury. There was nothing penal in this; it was simply because the peasants were accustomed to plank beds at home and preferred them because they were clean. The little infants were all in swaddling-clothes, and lay in cribs round the walls, while the mothers occupied the inner portion of the ward.



## ST. PETERSBURG

At St. Petersburg it was arranged that we were to visit the Grand Duchess Catherine's hospital on a certain day, and on arriving were received in great state by the chief physician and other members of the staff. I was presented with a bouquet and felt I was receiving royal honours. The staff, one and all, wore white hospital wrappers over their ordinary garments, and presented a curious appearance as they stood in ghostly array, radiantly pleased to receive us. The matron and nurses were all in white dresses, cut *à la princesse* without folds or trimmings of any kind. The material was batiste, which could be washed as easily as a pocket handkerchief. An outside pocket, a watch pocket, and a row of mother-of-pearl buttons down the front were allowed for practical purposes, but no stiff linen cuffs, collars, brooches, rings, or chatelaines permitted. The dresses were short to clear the ground. These tidy white dresses presented a neatness, common-senseness, and daintiness sadly wanting in our hospitals at home.

This hospital is said to be one of the most carefully regulated in the world, and enjoys a special interest in having been one of the first to adopt the reforms brought about through the teachings of Lister. My husband in the paper he wrote on these hospital visits gave the statistics showing how the mortality fell to 0·1 per 100, after the hospital was modernized.

In this hospital, which was remodelled under the direct control of the leading physician, Lazarewitch, there were separate rooms for every patient, and careful provision was made for isolating the various



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

sections, so that no germs of disease could be carried from one part to another. The keys of communication were only permitted to the heads of departments, and even the domestic offices were shut off by locked doors.

Warmth and adequate ventilation were kept up by stoves and furnaces, and so managed that the air could be constantly changed by an arrangement of flues.

Throughout the whole hospital the most perfect cleanliness was observed.

As soon as a room became vacant it was at once stripped, and a series of water-jets turned on to flush the walls and floors, which were made of mosaic and concrete. As the floors sloped towards a drain or gutter, which carried the fluid away outside, the surface of the concrete soon dried and was then perfectly clean. Every apartment and corridor was furnished with its water supply of this kind, and by a simple contrivance it could be made instantly available in case of fire.

Across the gardens were the latrines for the domestics, and some distance away from these on the same side the laundries. The conduct of these laundries formed an important part of the aseptic system. All soiled linen and washing materials were first soaked in tubs of disinfecting fluid, and then passed on through different rooms for drying and pressing, &c., until they were ready for the linen store again. Each laundry-woman had her assigned duties, and had a room allotted to her near her work.

As a result of this careful management we

## ST. PETERSBURG

ascertained that during the last three years there had been only one death from puerperal fever in the whole establishment, and this was in the case of a woman who was brought in hopelessly ill and died three days later.

If few hospitals supported by voluntary contributions have attained the sanitary perfection of this private charity, it is not too much to say that all hospitals have nowadays reaped more or less benefit from the almost universal adoption of aseptic and antiseptic treatment.

Deaths from pyæmia are now scarcely known even in the most crowded military hospitals during war, and the mortality from puerperal fever and other forms of blood-poisoning has everywhere diminished.

## CHAPTER VII

IF I have drifted into the eighties, and have now to come back to the point of departure, it is due to the exigencies of narration, and the fact that life is composed of many streamlets all running side by side.

We have now to see what some members of the family are doing, for in the kaleidoscopic changes that take place in most families the scenes have somewhat shifted.

The Fred Lehmanns have come to 15, Berkeley Square, where they were so long known in their beautiful and artistic home, and it was here in the early days that my sister asked us easually to drop in to dinner one night if we had nothing better to do. When we arrived we found a quintette on the *tapis*, consisting of Joachim, Piatti, and another whose name I have forgotten. My sister was to be pianist, and Fred Lehmann second violin at a coneert that was to come off the following night at the Hanover Square Rooms. It was one of the Wandering Minstrels' coneerts, which were organized for eharitable purposes, and extremely popular at the time. Fred Lehmann was already a minstrel, and a vacaney having occurred through the illness or defeetion of the pianist, my sister was suddenly called upon to fill the place. This was the rehearsal,

## MRS. FRED LEHMANN

and although Mrs. Fred was given no time for practice, her ear and aptitude were so inborn that I believe she could have followed on and improvised as she went, without ever seeing the music at all. But as things were she stuck to the music placed before her, and came off with great *éclat* without the faintest shadow of a blunder. I had the pleasure the next night of driving her to the concert, and although she had never appeared in public before, she rose to the occasion and played with all the serenity of a professional, to the delight of her husband and musical friends.

The Wills', on the other hand, had given up town life in favour of partial retirement, and had bought a charming little place in Hertfordshire, called Sherrards. It was situated in a corner of Sherrards Woods, the property of Lord Cowper, and was encircled by other beautiful properties, Panshanger being on the one side, Bocket Hall on the other, and Knebworth and Hatfield House within easy drives. Here they enjoyed all the pleasures of country life, with plenty of hunting and many agreeable neighbours. In summer garden parties were the order of the day, and on these festive occasions I had opportunities of continuing and keeping up the friendship, begun in girlhood, of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. I have often thought since—although I could not have thought then—how strange it must have been to Lord Lytton in his old age to find himself so close to the scene of his youth, when he sat as a boy to Lady Caroline Lamb for his portrait at Bocket Hall. Later it was at Bocket he was introduced to William Godwin,

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

the father-in-law of Shelley the poet, and also at Bocket where the stormy parting took place between himself and Lady Caroline Lamb so graphically described by Fitzgerald Molloy in "The Sailor King," recently published. The dinner at which he sat "black with jealousy and rage" took place at Panshanger, but the years which had intervened had so softened the susceptibilities of early youth that there was nothing to tell the troubled tale as we sat together tranquilly discussing electro-biology, and grapes, in that same corner of the world. And there on the lawn among the friends assembled were the new tenants of Bocket Hall, Lord and Lady Lawrence, and daughters recently returned from India and the dignities of Government House.

My aunt was soon recognized as a wit and delightful companion. The county was enchanted with her. On one occasion a neighbour who had been dining at Sherrards and had dressed at the house, forgot to take away his morning suit when he drove home at night, and sent the following letter next day :—

"A song I sing  
Of a curious thing  
Which no wise man would choose,  
But having which,  
Whether poor or rich,  
He would not wish to lose.  
Though as soon as he can gain it  
He ceases to retain it.

"C. DE LA PRYAM.

"An answer will oblige."



## MRS. WILLS

The answer that went back with the clothes was as follows :—

“The wisest man that e’er I saw  
Would scarcely wish to go to law,  
But, involved in a dispute,  
Would not like to lose his *suit*.  
Your ever faithful servant I am,  
Witty Mr. de la Pryam.”

On being asked by a Scottish professor if they had any dukes or marquises they could send as pupils, Mrs. Wills, who was an intimate friend, sent the following answer :—

“I fear that by no kind of fluke  
Can we send you a little Duke;  
And though close to us Bocket Park is,  
*There’s* not a chance of a young Marquis:  
Its owner, great Panshanger’s Earl,  
Is blessed with neither boy nor girl;  
His brother, next in the succession,  
Has ne’er a wife yet in possession.  
The present head of ‘the Bold Dacre’s’  
Has got no heir to his broad acres.  
Lord Lytton, he who governs Ind,  
Owns one wee boy, just born in Scinde:  
A neighbouring Bart., Sir Eustace Piers,  
Has but one son of tender years  
Whose infant mind and lisping speech  
Needs only nursery maids to teach;  
And so, you see, I’m driven wild,  
To think there’s neither chick nor child,  
Nor growing lad, nor youthful spark,  
For you to train at Abbey Park.”<sup>1</sup>

It was in the early days of Sherrards, 1870, that Dickens died and Uncle Harry finally withdrew from the partnership. The telegram announcing the seizure was a great shock, as the joint editors

<sup>1</sup> Our early home at St. Andrews.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

had lived so long together on terms of brotherly affection. Much has been written about Dickens, and the public have read many of his letters published since his death by his daughter Mary and sister-in-law Miss Hogarth. Some fifty of these letters were addressed to my uncle, but before me lies a pile of letters written by Harry Wills to his wife describing his various journeys with "Dick," that take us behind the scenes of his public and private life, and keep alive the unflagging interest felt in the most popular author of his day. To expand upon these would be to write another life of Dickens, but there are little bits here and there that may appropriately find a place in my story.

The following refers to a very early reading, and is dated December 3rd, 1853, but no address given. It is written on the office paper of "Household Words" to his wife :—

"I have been horribly vexed all day for not making you come down here to-day. It could have been managed so nicely. Dick, Mrs. Dick, and Miss Hogarth all exclaim against me for my stupidity. The 'Cricket' last night went off quite as well as the 'Carol'; but Dick does not like it so well; and indeed it is not nearly so well adapted for reading. But the audience were delighted—such attention, such laughing and crying I never saw anywhere. All the characters seem to live—no monotony, no hesitation, but all smooth and uncommonly lifelike without effort or staginess. . . . A grand dinner is to be given to Dickens to-morrow, so we do not start until twelve, but I shall be home at five o'clock. . . .

## DICKENS

“ If Dickens does turn Reader he will make another fortune. He will never offer to do so, of course. But if they *will* have him he will do it, he told me to-day.”

The next letter is from Mrs. Dickens to my aunt, and indicates the terms on which they lived :—

49, Avenue des Champs Elysees.

Paris, March 9th, 1856.

MY DEAR MRS. WILLS,

I cannot let Charles go to London to night without a word from me to thank you for your most kind and welcome letter, which it gave me so much pleasure to receive. I am so glad that you are pleased at your husband's pleasant arrangement with Miss Coutts, and that the *great man's* retirement from H.W. has been of service also to dear Mr. Wills ; but as to gratitude, do not speak of that, as my husband has such a true affection and regard both for Mr. Wills and yourself that it is a real pleasure for him when he can do anything to serve him.

You are of course *au courant* to all our little domestic news through your husband, therefore I will not run the risk of boring you by a repetition of the same.

We are all, thank God, perfectly well, and have very much enjoyed our stay in this charming city, indeed, we shall be sorry to leave it in the middle of May.

We have taken our old house, the Villa des Moulineaux, for the summer, and I do hope, dear Mrs. Wills, that you will not this year cheat us out

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

of our annual visit by going again to Scotland, but that you will spare us as long a time as you can to make up for our disappointment of last summer.

Great excitement prevails here at present with respect to the result of the Peace Conference. The accouchement of the Empress also is a great subject of interest.

She passes our house still every day on her way to the Bois de Boulogne, and looks very well and pretty. It is impossible to help feeling interested about her. She is so sweet-looking, and is, I believe, very good and charming in every way.

We went to see Ristori last Wednesday and were dreadfully disappointed in her. She is not to be compared to Rachel. I must not bore you by any more crossing, and with very best love to Mr. Wills and yourself, in which all unite with me, believe me always, dear Mrs. Wills, most affectionately your friend,

CATHERINE DICKENS.

### A READING IN EDINBURGH.

1, Doune Terrace, Edinburgh,

March 27th, 1858.

Dickens and I began work yesterday morning with Marshall's shop (Scotch jewellery) and at Littlejohns (confectioner), he spending some six or eight pounds in sweeties, cairngorms, shortbread, and Finnan haddys for presents to the girls, &c. Then four times round the Calton Hill: full of admiration. The city is more beautiful than ever. Everything is so square and clean, and substantial. The shops gorgeous. Then to the Rooms. The Lord Provost and his tail of Town Council, Robert Cox and the



## A READING IN EDINBURGH

philosophers. . . . When the reception was over I went off to Doune Terrace, Dickens starting for Arthur's Seat. The girls nearly ate me up. . . .

The secretary of the Philosophical Institution wrote to me to say that he had neither ate nor drank nor slept for days, he has been so bullied for tickets. None but members could have them, and the room does not hold all then, so many made themselves members to come to the Reading. Janet, being a member, went with the Sinclairs.

The Reading went off admirably. Capital audience. Wonderful unanimity. Wonderful happiness. Cheers and guffaws and pocket-handkerchiefs all in their right places. After it was over and Dickens was picking up his book, handkerchief, box of lozenges, &c., the Lord Provost came forward with a mahogany case like a painted harmonium case. Then he made a speech. Then he opened the case. It contained a magnificent chased and burnished wassail cup of great size with an inscription. The secretary told me privately it was meant to be an heirloom in the family. Dickens was delighted with it. He started at 9.25 this morning for London and I came off here. Some more of me eaten by the girls, who will soon be getting dyspeptic.

\* \* \* \* \*

Describing a visit to Bulwer Lytton, who was a constant contributor to "Household Words":—

June 8th, 1861.

I had a characteristic discussion with Bulwer this morning. I found him in a back street in St. James' at a private hotel, so very private that it almost



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

requires a guide to find it in St. James' Place. He had a German lounging suit on; of course profusely braided and wonderfully clean. No braces, so he passed his time in smoking a pipe about seven feet long and in pulling up his socks. Books and papers all about the floor with paths between: sofas, chairs, and table all covered with books and papers too. When I entered and was shut into the room, I found the back part of the baronet's person presented full at me. His deafness prevented his hearing me come in, and he went on picking papers out of a cheffonnier in the attitude of an acrobat when he imitates a frog, his head bent down, his seat of honour in the air, until I thought it might be well to administer a gentle tap by way of announcing my presence. However, after a minute or two he saw me. . . .

### RAILWAY ACCIDENT TO DICKENS.

Friday night, 1865.

I said when I wrote that Dickens would be in town this afternoon. Well, from the club I strolled into the station to meet him. Waited till dinner-time, and was told that the tidal train passengers would come up by the mail due at 6.35. Came here (the office) and dined alone. Went again. Conceive my horror when they told me that there had been a frightful accident at Staplehurst. For an hour I endured the most awful suspense. Telegraphed twice to the station. Mail train arrived. No Dick! Turned sick, and a horrid pain in my diaphragm. Went back to telegraph, when they told me there was a telegram for me, which I enclose. Imagine my

## MRS. CARLYLE'S DEATH

revulsion of feeling. At last Dick came, not touched ! It seems to have been the worst accident yet. Several lying dead.

Dick seems all right enough, but I sleep here (the office) to-night to be near him, for really there is no knowing what the shaking might do.

God bless you, my own. I seem as if I had been in the accident myself, what with my fright and Dick's appalling and graphic description of it.

John Foster, in his "Life of Charles Dickens," referring to this accident, considered that it ultimately proved fatal to Dickens. He writes :—"It was with shaken nerves but unsubdued energy he resumed his labours."

## MRS. CARLYLE'S DEATH.

April 25th, 1866.

Mrs. Carlyle's death was very sad. Of course Foster was a prominent figure in the transaction. Poor Mrs. Carlyle had been lunching with Mrs. Foster, and then went for her drive, setting her dog down in the park for exercise. It got run over, she took it into her carriage, and the excitement, it is supposed, killed her at once. The coachman drove her about for nearly an hour lifeless. Then some passengers stopped him, noticing something strange in her attitude as she reclined. He immediately drove his dead mistress to St. George's Hospital. There, finding she was dead, they put her into the dead-house. The coachman then went off to the Fosters, and John went to claim and remove the body. Then ensued the usual botheration—an order

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

from the coroner or from the Secretary of State. However, so great a power as John soon set this right, and he went to the dead-house, where he found the dog (who had not been hurt after all) lying on a part of his mistress's dress. She was then taken home. Carlyle never did anything for himself in his life, depending upon her for everything, so he is doubly desolate. He came to town from Edinburgh last night, and intends to take the body himself to Scotland to be buried. It is all very sad.

The Reading went off last night wonderfully well, considering that Dick was as hoarse as his favourite ravens. More people turned away than could get in. I had a long talk with Bulwer yesterday on guild and Couttsian affairs, and he asked very impressively after you.

### A MISTAKE AT ONE OF THE READINGS.

Clifton Down Hotel,

May 11th, 1866.

All the way along the line this morning I was looking forward to the dear handwriting that would greet me on going ashore from the train at Clifton.

Conceive my disappointment, rage, and excess of every bad passion when I found that none of the half-dozen that awaited me was in the beloved hand of write. Messengers sent off to all the post-offices, telegraphs to Birmingham, supposing you had directed there, but just as I had bitten off my last nail to the quick with vexation in comes the gorgeous porter (all red collar, green facings, and brass buttons) with the neat-handed envelope with the blue griffin —2.30. Second post !

## A READING BY DICKENS

We had the pleasure of meeting a small party of 2,100 friends at the Town Hall last night. They enjoyed Dr. Marigold immensely. Pickwick to follow. Just figure my amazement when Dick, instead of commencing "On the morning of the great trial Bardwell versus Pickwick," opened *Nickleby*! I ran out to Dolby (the manager), knowing Dick's exactitude, and mistrusting my own ears, to know who was mistaken. Dolby, staring as if I had stabbed him in the stomach, rushed out to the front of the hall to read the poster in the excess of his certainty that it was Pickwick, to find that Pickwick was announced. Meanwhile, the breakfast at the Saracen's Head had taken such a tight hold of the audience (who uttered Kentish fires of laughter at every third word) that to stop the reader and correct the mistake would have been madness.

Poor Dick ended *Nickleby* triumphantly, and tripped down the stairs of the platform, smiling to think that one more of the thirty was notched off. But the people would not go, demanded why they had not heard Pickwick, and Dick had to return and good-naturedly offer to read Pickwick then, if they desired it. Although the walls shook with applause, there were one or two considerate No! No's! However, Pickwick he read in addition; and though awfully exhausted after his two hours and a half of reading, was quite merry over the mishap, and made jokes about it till bedtime. I am sorry to say he suffers now headache and brow neuralgia, sure signs of excess of nervous power wasted over-night. On such occasions he is the most patient, plucky, make-the-best-of-bad-luck beings I ever knew.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

GOING TO SEE DICKENS OFF TO AMERICA.

Liverpool, June 8th, 1867.

Here we are after a very pleasant ride. We started like children full of play, then we subsided into lunch, then seven of the eleven fell fast asleep, and I was *not* (I can call three witnesses to prove the fact) one of them. Then we got playful again and came on here merrily enough.

Dick is so different to what he is at any other time. After lunch the saloon was rather crummy, and he actually took out a clothes-brush and flicked away all the crumbs from seats and floor. . . .

Uncle Harry survived his beloved friend exactly ten years. He was writing a book at the time of his death, and when it slowly dawned on his mind that he was not likely to recover, he exclaimed impetuously one day in my presence, "If I die before I finish that book I will go mad!" It was not easy to help laughing at such a "bull," but he was terribly serious over it. When he felt the end drawing near he desired his wife to send for Mrs. Lynn Linton at once, as she was the only person he knew who could finish the book. She was in Italy and ill when the telegram reached her, but she started off, and arrived at Sherrards without loss of time, to the great relief of everyone. The MS. was brought to his bedside, and Mrs. Linton was asked to read it aloud from the beginning, which she proceeded to do. But as she went on the dying author could not grasp his own work, and, realizing the terrible fact, desired her to stop. Mrs. Linton described the look of pain



## DEATH OF HENRY WILLS

that came over him when he turned his face to the wall literally, for from that moment he slowly began to sink. He told his wife he had "thrown up the sponge." Five days later, on September 1st, he breathed his last, and the forsaken MS. is now reposing quietly and undisturbedly in a brown paper tomb among the sad little treasures of my library : my literary *Père la Chaise*.

On September 6th the dear unele was laid in his grave at Ayot with a show of respect and affection almost unprecedented in that part of the world. Many of his literary friends assembled from their various summer resorts, and the neighbours of every class gathered together actuated by the one common sorrow.

My aunt, with all her light flashes of wit, had fathomless depths of Scotch sentiment lying in every nook and corner of her heart ready to well up when in the mood. One day she wrote the following verses, which were set to music by her friend Mr. Wrighton, and sung by her young friends the Misses Ferrari, to whom the Queen (Victoria) was always very kind. At Balmoral the Queen would frequently ask for this song, as it touched a chord in her own heart, and she never could hear it without "greeting."

When gloaming steals softly out over the hill,  
An' the shadows o' evenin' hae fa'en on the lea,  
My heart's fu' o' sadness an' winna lie still,  
For there's naebody now lookin' kindly on me.

It was na' aye sae in the days that are gane,  
There was jokin', an' daffin' neath ilka gean tree ;  
But now I sit silent, and dowie, my lane,  
An' there's naebody looking or thinking on me.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

I had youth then, an' health, and by friends was caress't,  
I had lovers wha swore that for me they would dee,  
But o' time or o' sorrow they stud na' the test,  
An' there's naebody noo' lookin' kindly on me!

But why spend my days in regret for the past!  
Or why sie repining at Fortune's decree!  
I may vent my upbraidings, an' griefs to the last,  
But 'twill no bring *him* back that looked kindly on me!

Twelve years after her husband's death Mrs. Wills followed him to the grave.

For the last year of her life I was able to be with her a good deal, as she was then resident in London. Up to the last she could not help being amusing, for her sense of humour could not be subdued. Within a few days of her death she startled me by saying she wished me to write out her obituary notice, as she would *like to see it*. This I did, then folded it up and put it in my purse, that no astonished eyes might behold it. Presently a feeble voice came forth from the pillows with the following utterance: "Well, it is not every woman who is walking about London with her living aunt's obituary notice in her purse!" Her mind—as not infrequent on the confines of death—used to wander back to early days when she lived in Edinburgh. She was speaking of a "puir old body" as if she—the old buddy—were not far off. I asked who was the old body? She then unfolded the following pathetic tale. "She was called Water Annie, because she used to eke out a living in the old town of Edinburgh by carrying stoups of water to the different houses. On June 18th she was given up to despair every year as it came round. She would then walk up and down the White Horse Close, and with her mind fixed on

## DICKENS' LETTERS

Waterloo, where her husband fell, kept exclaiming in a state of dementia, 'I lost Jamie Cawmel (Campbell). He was all I had. All I had. I lost, ' &c.'

My aunt left me the welcome legacy of her library ; all books, letters, and papers. Hence the mine of wealth that has done so much to lighten the last lonely years of my life. One large tin box contains nearly 500 of Charles Dickens' letters to my uncle, with other relics. Many of these letters are of great literary interest, as they discuss the *technique* of literature. He evidently set great store on characters *living* in stories. Articles must never be dull, they must, if possible, "sparkle," although he confesses he could not always *sparkle to order* himself!

This business correspondence between the two editors is often amusing, and always deeply in earnest.

In addition there are bundles of letters from all the contemporary writers of the period, Bulwer Lytton, Wilkie Collins, John Foster, Shirley Brooks, and all the early Punch set. Among the many treasures is an original verse of Hood's "Song of the Shirt," given to my aunt by Mark Lemon, then editor.

The old photograph-books which I gathered from all quarters of the house contain photographs of the Dickens family at every stage of life, including Box, a favourite dog, and the house at Boulogne referred to in Mrs. Dickens' letter, the identity of which is now merged in a convent.

## CHAPTER VIII

It is the year 1874; exactly ten years since we found ourselves at the bottom of the hill of Fortune, gazing into the mists that shrouded the top from view. In these arduous years we had so successfully climbed this hill—on which, alas! so many are stumbling down—that we reached at last the joyous altitude of a shooting-lodge in Scotland. It was pleasant to look forward to the summers and autumns when sons could cultivate the love of sport at their father's side, in the midst of family life. Needless to say these joys were not attained without a few difficulties. The lodge of our aspiration had not been inhabited for some years, but owing to this very fact the game in the woods surrounding the house had lived and multiplied during that time in undisturbed peace. Mr. Fleetwood Wilson and his daughter (now Princess Alexis Dolgouriki) arranged to drive us over to see the place from their lodge which was five miles distant to drive, and two and a half to walk. On reaching the spot we had to take to our feet, as the bridges were too rotten for a carriage to pass.

The scene before us was one of exquisite desolation. Winter storms and summer suns had done their worst unheeded. Enchanted with the wild beauty of the place, we made our way down, and



## OUR SHOOTING-LODGE

quietly slipping round to the front of the house, beheld a long deserted dwelling-place caught in all the picturesque tangle of neglect, like the Sleeping Beauty's castle where everyone had gone to sleep for a hundred years.

Our presence acted as the breaking of a spell on two roedeer lying asleep at the door in a bed of overgrown vegetation. They rose and started into the adjoining thicket, spreading alarm as they went, for the pheasants at once abandoned the security of the woods, and the hares and rabbits went bounding into cover. The place seemed alive with game, and the game suddenly alive to an unwonted sense of danger. This was promising from a sportsman's point of view, but it was clear that the very desolation which encouraged the breeding of game was prohibitory to the presence of man. For some years not a soul had lived on the place save an old woman who kept the keys, and she was dying. We found her under a low thatched roof, cramped with rheumatism, suffering from a broken arm, and knotted like a gnarled oak. She was surrounded by apples which had fallen from a tree; and when I, Eve-like, was tempted to take one, she shrieked, "You'll no take the laird's apples!" in a shrill and awful voice, guarding at once the laird's property and her immortal soul from everlasting punishment.

Wherever we turned the scene was that of dilapidation and neglect, and altogether so hopeless that we sadly wended our way up the brae again and across the rotten bridges, feeling that the paradise so recently found for us by various friends in the neighbourhood was already lost.



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Without entering too minutely into the reasons that made us reconsider the difficulties, it is enough to state that eventually they were overcome, and the following letters will help to explain how the change came about that transformed the scene of desolation into one of beauty, comfort, and happiness for our tenancy of nineteen years.

From the stonemason came this lucid and hopeful missive :—

Aberlour, April 13th, 1874.

MADAM,

I Beg to Inform you that I went over to the Laggan this week to see the house you referd to for a coach-house, I do not no if one of them owld be large a nuff, if not the midel wall could be removed and both apartments put into one which owld be twenty feet three inches in lenth, or if you consider that one of this apartments is large a nuff the floors could be lifted and lowered as low as the surface outside, and a large door put in in front wall. To finish mason, carpenter, and Plaster worck it owld require thirteen Pounds to make the two into one. I may state that I intend to mack a commenements in getting in metteriels directly to COMENCE, and I wish that you owld give your concent to cut down the tree where the coal-house is to be, as it can not be put up to give satisfaction with it standing, I seed the Proprietor and he stated to cutt away anney three that was in the way.

Yours truly,

JAMES McALISTER.

By the 23rd of April the plumber announced

## THE LAGGAN

the completion of his contract in the following letter :—

MADAM,

I have this day examined the Water Works at Laggan, and found them to be working in a most efficient manner. The water has been on this last three weeks, but I have shut it off in case of any accident which might perhaps occur when there are no persons in the house.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN MCINTYRE.

P.S.—A remittance of the account will oblige.

The month of May brings further good news of progress.

Aberlour, May 26th, 1874.

MADAM,

I Beg to inform you that the worck at the Laggan is Progressing as favourable as I can my men will be done this night and the carpenter is gowing on with his department the Shelter will be done to-morrow with the roof of the Hall and also looking over the rest of the Roofs about the place except the washing house as you stated when at Laggan not to mind it I am happy to Inform you that Wester Elchies<sup>1</sup> has given uss two calls and I feel much obliged to the Gentlemen being that their is no person looking after me for the sufficancey of the worck—their was one omission that I neglected in my Estimate which owld require to be done this

<sup>1</sup> A neighbouring friend, called after the place, as customary in Scotland.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

is the windows owld all require Pointing outside with cement to Prevent damp or Rain getting in at the sids and sils also the oven in the Kitchen is completely done on side next the grait in fact she is no uce the way she is, if it be your wiss she could be sent to Elgin Foundry and a new one cast the same. However I will be glad to do what ever you wissh, and regarding the Blinds for window be cind a nuff in letting me no what couller you owld lick them whither white or drab couller.

Yours Respectfully,

JAMES MCALISTER.

When the London season was on the wane it fell to my lot to go forth into the wilderness alone, to get things into order for the family, with the assistance of the keeper and his wife, who lived across the Roy burn. The calm after the storm of town life brought that welcome peace which London cannot give. There was only my dog and I. No noise, no traffic. The only sounds those of the coo-cooing of the wood-pigeons and the croak-croaking of the pheasants in the covert round about.

In the words of Marvell I truly felt—

“ Society is all but rude  
To this delicious solitude.”

Still, when the period of “delicious solitude” was over, it was a great privilege to be able to welcome others to share the simple joys of our holiday—those who, in common with ourselves, are workers in the world's great hive. In a Highland lodge, with moor and river, there is always plenty for everyone to do, and hard work for the thorough

## HOLIDAYS AT THE LAGGAN

sportsman. To him, every change in the weather brings its own particular joy. If fine, he knows the birds are "lying"—so to the moor he goes. If cloudy and dark of aspect, the birds will be wild, i.e. they won't "lie"; but then the water is in order and the fish are "rising"—so riverward he wends his way. If perchance the weather is unpropitious for either, he falls back on the absorbing happiness of devoting hours to the silent inspection of tackle and fly-books. He is content, if need be, to go over the same ground the next day, and the next, with unflagging interest, and no other variation than that of inspecting his companion's tackle and fly-books, and listening to the deeds performed by a "Jock Scott," a "Lady Caroline," or a "Blue Doctor."

Still, there are always to be found a few less sporting guests; men not caring so much for the birds on the moor as for the moor itself, with its keen air and invigorating exercise; not caring so much for the fatigue of angling the fish out of the water as for the peace of lying on the bank and watching others do the work. Some of our friends found interest in the geological and archæological features of the surrounding country. Others cared nothing for the grouse as game, but would take a profound interest in the disease to which they are subject, and speculate on the possibilities of setting up a modified form of the malady which might protect them against the more destructive. Then literary friends, full of the heat and turmoil of life, occasionally came laden with MSS.; but however important, we always knew that such work was



## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

doomed, for in Arcadia all mental exertion flagged, and the mind passed through a gradual process of dissolution, leaving perhaps a spirit willing, but in most cases a mass of weak flesh lying amidst the mossy turf in torpid and delicious ease.

In the clear, crisp Highland air, amidst such tranquil surroundings, all the high-strung irritability of town life withered and died from want of nourishment; the most confirmed dyspeptic would become a new man, and settle down into a peaceful, nerveless condition previously unknown.

Thus life in our Highland shooting-lodge had a delightful way of going joyously along.

Sitting in my library alone some thirty years later, surrounded by the books and letters that speak to me, a series of *tableaux vivants* representing this period of my life pass before my mind. There lies before me a letter from Sir Henry James written to my husband from Tulchan Lodge, Advie, where he generally spent the shooting season with Mr. Bass. There is no date beyond a brief "Wednesday," but he writes to say he will bring Mr. Bright down by early train next day. It had already been arranged that John Bright was to try his luck in our salmon pools, which were among the best in the river, in these, the good days.<sup>1</sup>

It happened at this time that my aunt Mrs. Wills was staying with us, and I think it must have been after the death of Uncle Harry, consequently the year 1881. I was looking forward with great

<sup>1</sup> The fishing fell off very much in later years owing to the distilleries, but eventually improved on account of the penalties imposed by Act of Parliament for pollution.



## JOHN BRIGHT

pleasure to making the acquaintance of our distinguished guest, but I observed a strange and unaccountable reserve on the part of my dear old lady, who said not a word either for or against John Bright. At last the luncheon hour arrived, and with it the group of hungry sportsmen from the river. My aunt now came forward and, suddenly breaking all reserve, shook hands heartily with John Bright, saying she did not require to be introduced, for she had already been introduced to him a *hundred years ago* at the house of her brother, Robert Chambers, when he was living at Musselburgh for the summer. "Ah!" said John Bright, "I remember that very well, and a jolly day we had."

"And do you remember being taken to the nursery to see the twin babies asleep in the same cradle?"

"To be sure I do," responded John Bright.

"Well, one of the twins is now Mrs. Priestley, and is your hostess to-day!"

And so on the strength of this very old and unexpected acquaintance we all went merrily in to lunch.

Another vivid tableau represents Sir John Millais (not yet promoted) lying on a rug under the gean tree, which spread its magnificent foliage and dangled its tempting fruit outside the drawing-room window. Above, among the geans, our younger daughter Jenny—who was still in the doll stage of life—was generally perched, and sufficiently obliging to rain geans down upon the Royal Academician who loved geans, but was too lazy to get them for himself. This child became so associated in his

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

mind with nothing but legs that in a letter written to her father later he sent his love to—here followed the Manx arms—three legs going in all directions! From this dear friend we had frequent visits, as he generally had a house in Perthshire for his numerous family, and could easily run up for a few days' sport. He was very fond of fishing, and much struck with the Spey cast, not easy to acquire, but splendidly managed by our sons, who knew no other cast. Consequently, whenever Sir John espied one of our boys—in Piccadilly, for instance, on the opposite side of the street—his recognition would take the form of Spey casting an imaginary line across an imaginary stream over the heads of an astonished populace.

He had always a delightful friendly way with him, but was often rather vague as to who his friends were, and his son Everett gave me an amusing account of how he—his father—met a fellow he knew in Regent Street one day and gave him a cordial greeting, saying he could not remember where they had last met, but he was very glad to see him again, &c. The fellow turned out to be his own butler!

I had once an amusing episode with him about a sofa. It was a remarkably quaint and beautiful old sofa I had fallen in love with in Paris. I tried hard not to buy that sofa, and got home from Paris safely without it. Still it kept lingering in my mind. Sir John Millais was then furnishing his lovely house at Palace Gate, so I told him about the sofa.

"Is it clean?" was the first question he asked. I assured him it was clean. The interview wound

## SIR JOHN MILLAIS

up with "Well, let us see the sofa." In due course the sofa arrived at my house, and on seeing it once more my virtue vanished; I felt I could not part with that sofa. I tried to keep out of Millais' way, and felt I was getting dishonourable, but to part with that sofa was impossible! Millais heard somehow that the sofa had arrived, and called at my house. Fortunately I was out, but my son Robert was in the drawing-room when Millais walked in, and seeing *the* sofa before his eyes, exclaimed, "That is my sofa!" "Oh, no," said my son, "my mother says she will keep it to herself."

The following is the letter I received from him in consequence:—

7, Cromwell Place,  
South Kensington,  
July 27th, 1876.

DEAR MRS. PRIESTLEY,

What is this I hear? You mean to keep the sofa yourself after buying it for me? Do you mean to drive me to law? Are you prepared to receive a letter from my solicitor beginning, "*Madam*, In compliance with the instructions of my client, Mr. J. E. Millais, I beg you to," &c., &c., &c.?

*My sofa* is charming, and I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you for having purchased it for me. On acquainting me with price paid and expenses of carriage I will send you a cheque for the whole amount. Sorry to have missed you.

Yours gratefully,  
J. E. MILLAIS.

But to go back to "The Laggan"—Anglice, "The

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Cowshed"—it is not difficult to perceive that life was rendered particularly bright for us through friends from a distance and friends near. Our poorer neighbours, too, were a never-failing source of interest to us, and their simplicity was charming. One day, while standing at the station waiting for a train to come in, I perceived an old woman casting shy looks of recognition in my direction, but could not remember who she was. I went up to her, however, and, shaking a horny and friendly hand, exclaimed, "I ought to know you. Who are you?"

Old woman, replying, said, "I'm quite well, I thank you, m'em ; and *hoo* are you yoursel'?"

There was always something impressive if not tragic in the thought of their awful isolation during the winter months, and the bowed-down calmness with which they faced the prospect. One old woman who lived in a hut alone on the moor was totally blind! In another hut far removed from human habitation there lay a man dying of cancer in the throat, a distressing object to behold. In the same room slept the wife and six children. There were no ostensible means of existence, no doctors, no outside aids of any kind, no neighbours, no living creatures near save the grouse, whose weird notes alone broke the universal silence. The one thing that kept them from despair was the absolute belief that everything is decreed by the Almighty for some wise purpose. I was reading lately of a poor man thus isolated saying that "God was his nearest neighbour," and underneath was written "Admirable" by Robert Burns, who had read it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Chambers' Journal."



## HAUGHY

This philosophy of resignation was magnificent, but it was not life.

Away down in the haugh, far removed from the lonely moorlanders, there lived a man called Haughy, from the name of his house.<sup>1</sup> Haughy was a doctor without a diploma, and a surgeon in active practice without a degree. Haughy was a quack. Needless to say, he effected cures that baffled the Royal College of Surgeons, and was the most popular man in the whole country-side. He lived within touch of the Aberdeen and Speyside railway junction at Craigellachie, and when he was at home for consultations he hoisted a red flag. Consequently the news was spread up and down the various lines with wonderful rapidity in these few terse words conveyed by the guards: "Haughy's flag is oot." I happened to be passing along the line one day when a duly-qualified practitioner from Grantown jumped into the carriage at one of the stations. "Oh! there's Haughy's flag out!" he exclaimed, as we passed The Haugh in the distance. I had never heard of Haughy before, so my duly-qualified friend insisted that I should get out at Craigellachie and follow the lame, the halt, and the faithful who were sure to get out there on their pilgrimage to Mecca.

As it was one of my periods of solitude I determined to see the thing through, notwithstanding the fear of excommunication from the two Royal Colleges. When the one train drew up from Aberdeen and the other came in simultaneously from Inverness, a most extraordinary scene took place. The porters all rushed forward to haul

<sup>1</sup> The Haugh.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

out those who could not help themselves, and amidst shrieks and screams the wretched creatures were dragged across to the other line, where they had all to be got into the train again. The sympathy excited was great, but the treatment rough in the extreme, considering the dislocations and injuries from which many of the people were suffering. At Aberlour they had all to be got out once more, and I found myself in the position of a military bearer (minus the red cross) attending the wounded at the front. Those who were able made a rush for the ferry about a quarter of a mile off, followed by a slow procession of people with crutches and people being dragged and helped along by friends. I stuck to a boy suffering agonies from a swollen and inflamed knee-joint, and made myself useful among the worst cases in the rear. By the time we got across the ferry those in front were racing to get into the house first.

Once across the river, I hoped the worst of our troubles were passed, but not at all; we had two stiles to get over and two large fields still to negotiate. At last when we reached the house, the front door, which faced us and might have been handy, remained closed in the rigid disuse of ages, and we had to follow the multitude round to the back and take our places in the kitchen. Here the gude wife, with her coats tucked up, went through her work as usual, only stopping to announce who was to be seen next. The kitchen was fairly large and set all round with benches on which sat the patients. Hung over the peat fire was a big kail-pot, which was stirred now and then by anybody sitting near. There

## HAUGHY

seemed to be a general understanding of the needs of a kail-pot, and the gude wife (who was the sister of Haughy) was extra busy that day and needed help.

The news of my advent had long preceded my presence and had created a certain stir in the dove-cote, so that I was not kept long waiting before my message to Haughy was answered by a polite request that I should walk up. Needless to say, the best parlour on the ground-floor, in common with the front door, could not be used for such wild everyday sort of work; it would have been pure waste and extravagance! Therefore all the dislocations and broken bones had to be got up a narrow dark companion-ladder as a final effort before the bone-setter of universal fame could be reached. My greeting was most cordial. Here was a simple-minded being who believed in himself because all his own little world believed in him, and the Almighty it was who had endowed his family with the power to heal, from father to son, for generations. Would I tak' a seat?

"Yes, certainly; I have come to see how you are getting on."

The consulting-room was the best bedroom, therefore never used for sleeping in. It contained a four-post bed, and a large round table in the middle of the room. The table was littered with sheets of paper and many pencils, blue and black. Against the wall was a big sofa. Close to this I sat in a chair and watched the proceedings with the pleasant sensation of a spy in the enemy's camp. Presently a great noise was heard outside, which took Haughy to the head of the stairs to help a young fellow on

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

crutches who was struggling to get up. He was landed on the sofa and the nature of the injury to the knee explained. After feeling it up and down, came the ominous words,—

“Hud on.”

In another moment Haughy’s fist had come thundering down on the knee-cap, the leg being stretched out meanwhile. I thought all was over, and shut my eyes, fearing to see the limb scattered all over the room.

“Weel, you can get up noo,” said Haughy.

I opened my eyes to find the young fellow standing on his own legs, looking the picture of satisfaction!

“You’ll be able to walk noo,” said Haughy.

“O’oo aye,” quoth the other, “and what am I to pay ye?”

“Twa shillings,” said Haughy; and off walked the man, feeling he had got a good bargain, and rattled down the stairs carrying his crutches with him!

Next came a lad with an arm that had been injured with an anchor and was contracted at the elbow. It was terrible to look at, but the youth was full of hopefulness as he explained he had used the liniment and it “reekit like a lum.”<sup>1</sup> No severe handling was resorted to in this case, but the reeking was to be continued.

Now two decent old women came in, one stout, the other lean, both talking volubly, and were not the least disconcerted by my presence. All the time they were talking they were busy disrobing each other, as they both suffered from the same kind

<sup>1</sup> Chimney.



## HAUGHY

of something "just doon the back below the shuther (shoulder)." When the seat of the malady was laid bare Haughy's two thumbs came slowly and severely down over the ground till a cry came forth, and Haughy remarked,—

"There's y'in there."

"Aye," said the woman, "there's y'in there."

When two or three of *them* had been discovered he took a blue pencil from the table, and, wetting it with his mouth, proceeded to draw an outline from the shoulder to the waist, then back, with many curves resembling bays and peninsulas, to the shoulder. Within the blue line liniment was to be applied.

With the other woman the same process was gone through, but her malady was on the other side, which involved a drawing with less complicated outline.

The one woman was charged a shilling, and the other nothing at all, as her gude man had paid twa shillings for a consultation that same week.

Subjoined are two prescriptions written in my presence and copied for my benefit at my own request:—

"Take two oz. of anodyne Liniment rubb in a very Little of it night and morning with a persons hand over all the parts the shinnews is tight or Contracted or spraind and take a  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz of Camphorated oile  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz of mashmallow ointement both well mixed together rubb in a little of the ointement after each time you rubb in the Linimint upon the same parts you can git more of the above if required."

No signature.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

" $\frac{1}{2}$  oz Tincture of clatine  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz asetic acid bath mixed together rubb in a little night and morning with a small Brush upon the parts effected and aply Brown Frinsh vinegar 4 times a day over all the parts effected By damping a flannel Cloth in the vinegar and aply it over the parts mentioned above and aply a Cammamoile pultus (poultice) over the same parts every second night when going to bed."

Provided with suchlike prescriptions all went away happy and content.

After this interesting experience I heard no more of Haughy till the following year, when he humbly knocked at our *back* door and inquired if he could see Dr. Priestley. He had come as a patient to consult him, and was found to be suffering from a rapid form of cancer and had not long to live. He was now no longer the quack in the estimation of the duly-qualified physician, but a fellow-creature doomed to suffer till released by death. There was no one else to look after this old man, who had always shown sympathy with the poor and the greatest consideration for their pockets. It therefore turned out in the general topsy-turvydom of things that Haughy was not only attended in his last illness by my husband, who was then a Censor of the College of Physicians, but received the benefit and comfort of several consultations from other London physicians who came to stay with us. When any new medicine was recommended to him he was too nervous to take it unless I poured out the first dose and gave it to him with my own hand, which indeed I was very glad to do. In recognition of these services great baskets of superb jargonelle pears were

## DEATH OF HAUGHY

sent to our house as long as they lasted. They grew peacefully all round that front door which was never opened save for a funeral.

When Haughy died he was mourned from Aberdeen to Inverness and all round about. The Sunday following his death the minister of the Presbyterian church extolled not only him but Dr. Priestley by name from the pulpit, and thereby rejoiced the hearts of the people.

## CHAPTER IX

THE year 1884 was a memorable one for us. It was the terecentenary of the Edinburgh University. It was to be a big affair, as honorary degrees were to be conferred on notable men from all parts of the civilized world. Among others my husband was to be made an LL.D., but as he was very busy he had to make the journey over-night, while I preceeded him on the morning of April 14th.

On arriving at King's Cross I found the platform in a great bustle, with foreigners rushing about and officials directing them and attending to matters generally. I was sitting in an ordinary first-class carriage when Dr. Henri Gueneau de Mussy came up to say that Pasteur and his party were in a private saloon, and he begged that I would be his guest. A great saloon carriage with a suite of compartments had been placed at his disposal by Mr. Younger, the celebrated brewer of Edinburgh, who desired in this way to mark his appreciation of the benefits he had derived from "*Les études sur la Bière.*" In order to further mark the occasion he had given £500 to the University.

Presently one of the officials came up with a similar message from Pasteur, and, asking for my return ticket, placed in my hands the equivalent in cash. I now had the pleasure of finding myself the



## FRENCH SAVANTS

one woman and only English person in the midst of French *savants*. The party consisted of M. Caro, Mézières, Guizot (son of the Minister), all distinguished members of the Academie des Sciences : M. Ferdinand de Lesseps and Mademoiselle Ferdinande, the little daughter without whom he never travelled ; Dr. Gueneau de Mussy, his son-in-law, M. de Girardin ; Pasteur's son-in-law, Vallery-Radot ; and the two secretaries of de Lesseps.

Of de Lesseps we saw little during the journey, as he occupied the adjoining carriage with his secretaries and slept all the way. Of Mademoiselle, aged about twelve, we had enough, for she scampered to and fro, buffeted the *savants*, sat down occasionally to draw everybody's portrait, and was an *enfant* truly *terrible*. She had travelled all over the world, from Panama to Egypt, with her father, who seemed to carry her off on world-wide expeditions much as he would his carpet-bag. We formed a very happy party, and all were enchanted to hear that I knew "Monsieur Youngaire" personally, and used to dance with him in my youth at the Edinburgh balls. Pasteur was in great spirits, and laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks at the funny stories told by his friends as we all sat round the table. At luncheon-time, on reaching York, they were all bent on having Rosbif and ale, Younger's Edinburgh ale if possible. After this a period of drowsy silence took place ; then one after another would rouse up, and an interregnum of scientific and intellectual talk would ensue. M. Caro got out the address he had to read or present to the University, and wished to know what I thought of it. It referred to Mary

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Queen of Scots as the link between France and Scotland, and was gracefully polite.

Then the conversation turned on de Lesseps and the Suez Canal, Pasteur maintaining that in the course of the construction de Lesseps had travelled 86,000 leagues, which was more than the distance of the earth from the moon. As this seemed incredible to some of the party, Pasteur tore off the margin of a newspaper, wrote on it the following, and sent it across to de Lesseps, who had to be wakened up to read and sign it. I give it in English :—

“During the course of the construction of the Suez Canal M. de Lesseps has travelled 86,000 leagues—that is, ten thousand more than the distance of the earth from the moon?”

“PASTEUR.”

“This is true. Certified as correct by

FERDINAND DE LESSEPS.”

Before we parted company I made the suggestion that they should all come and dine at my house on their return to London, that they might meet Lister, Sir James Paget, and a few of our English *savants*. This was unanimously carried with the exception of Mézières, who had to hurry on to Paris. The rest were to be at Brown's Hotel for a few days. De Lesseps et Mademoiselle were not included in the invitation, as I knew they were on the wing. When the train was drawing up at the Edinburgh station Pasteur put his head out of the window, and seeing a vast crowd on the platform, drew back and called, “Where is de Lesseps? Tell him to come, for the

## PASTEUR IN LONDON

people are waiting to see him." De Lesseps accordingly was shoved forward, and walked first through the avenue of people, who gave him a cordial greeting. But it was Pasteur they wanted, and when he walked up the scene was one of wild enthusiasm, for many of that multitude were students of the university.

Strange to say, we rarely met during the four succeeding days, except on Academic occasions, until we re-assembled in the train and were as children again, bent on light-hearted frolic with brief interludes of seriousness and quiet.

The day fixed for my dinner party was the 22nd. A telegram to my daughter Jenny to prepare for a dinner of twenty with evening party to follow did all that was required. During the forenoon of the 22nd a large hamper arrived from Mr. Alfred de Rothschild as a tribute of esteem for the distinguished Frenchmen whom he was unable to meet on account of his father's recent death. The hamper contained one of the celebrated Rothschild cakes, many other cakes, and quantities of superb grapes, peaches, and other fruits.

The dinner was a great success, but the real entertainment had not yet begun. There was mystery in the air.

The evening party began assembling before our *savants* left the dining-room, but at last when they came up I took possession of Pasteur, and the folding-doors being now thrown open for the first time, led him into a darkened room, telling him not to be alarmed, not to ask any questions, but to sit down where I placed him, and have perfect faith. My

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

husband and daughter directed the rest of the company, no one knowing what was going to happen. What did happen was utter darkness and the projection on a screen of a series of lantern slides illustrating Pasteur's early researches on Ferments. I had collected them in Paris for the benefit of the National Health Society to illustrate their lectures. The astonishment of Pasteur knew no bounds. He at once recognized his own work, and advancing himself to the screen, delivered the most interesting lecture as each plate came on, the last being a portrait of himself, which brought cheers from the audience and tears from himself. When it was over, and all was brightness and gaiety again, each one of the French Academicians came up to thank me for the *honour I had done France* and to express the pleasure it had given them to find Pasteur so highly appreciated.

These slides became celebrated, and were sent to various places to illustrate lectures. I was only too glad that Pasteur's work should be known, as these were still early days for the new cult. Finally I had a letter from Professor Tyndall asking the loan of them for a lecture he was giving at the Royal Institution. When the lecture came off I was sitting among the audience absorbed in interest, when suddenly the lecturer turned the eyes of all my friends upon me by making a handsome acknowledgment of my practical contribution to the lecture!

The next year, 1885, I received the following amusing letter from Pasteur in response to one I had written to him. It is dated from Arbois, the former home of his father :—



## LETTER FROM PASTEUR

Arbois (Jura), October 2nd, 1885.

VERY DEAR MADAME,

What must you think of my silence? Your last kind letter to me was of the 27th May and now we are at the 2nd of October! Four long months!

I will not try to plead my innoeence—I am guilty, very guilty. Allow me only to plead extenuating circumstances!

You were saying that the editor of the "Fortnightly Review" had asked you for an article on the English edition of Vallery-Radot's book, instead of a notice already prepared, that your friend Mrs. Lynn Linton, a woman of great merit and style, had kindly undertaken it, that the article was going to appear, and that you would send it us immediately on its publication. I have received nothing as yet. These are the extenuating circumstances; but we were wrong, very wrong, my son-in-law and I, in waiting for the article before thanking you at once for all the trouble you had taken, and expressing to your authoress friend the lively gratitude of the author of the "Histoire d'un savant" and of his master. We shall be pardoned, I hope.

With your taste enlightened by travels, I wonder, dear Madame, where you are at this moment, and when you will receive these few lines? What Congress has attracted your great curiosity of men and things, and where have you taken your kind and obedient husband? Has Aberdeen had the preference? I have just been reading this morning in one of your "Scientific Reviews" the eloquent and deep speech of Sir Lyon Playfair, speaking as the

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

President of the British Association. The speeches of English men of mark have an accent, a pith, a picturesqueness that I always admire, and that one is far from finding in the same degree in France.

I have again passed the year 1885 in new studies on rabies. They have, I think, much advanced the question, the great and capital question, of the prophylaxy of the complaint after the bite. You and Dr. Priestley will, I think, be satisfied. For the first time I have dared to attempt a treatment on a man which has succeeded perfectly.

You will soon see the condensed details, which are, however, fairly clear, in a paper that I am going to read to the Academy of Sciences after my return to Paris towards the end of October or the beginning of November.

The "Review" was awaiting him all the time in Paris, and was acknowledged later.

Three weeks after this letter was written I received the following from Dr. Henri Gueneau de Mussy :—

15, Rue du Cirque,

Fb. St. Honoré.

October 28th, 1885.

DEAR MRS. PRIESTLEY,

I know that you will be pleased to read the last communication of Pasteur's to the *Academie des Sciences* and the *Academie de Médecine*. Of course, I was present yesterday when he delivered the enclosed note, and I never witnessed such an enthusiasm in any scientific audience. Enthusiasm was not quite unmixed with terror when the case of Joseph Meister was described, and it was easy

## MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND PASTEUR

to perceive that dear Pasteur was himself quite overwhelmed with emotions of every sort when he witnessed the operation on a fellow-creature for the first time. However, I think that no one can entertain any doubt on the success obtained, except J. G., who doubts everything, unless what he does himself.

Believe me, dear Mrs. Priestley,

Ever yours faithfully,

H. GUENEAU DE MUSSY.

Early in March, 1886, I was reading the *Times* one morning, when I saw that Sir Henry Roscoe had asked a question in the House of Commons desiring to know if the Government would appoint a Commission to go over to Paris to inquire into Pasteur's researches on rabies and the prophylactic measures he was adopting to save human beings from the development of that malady after being bitten by mad dogs. Mr. Chamberlain, who replied, said he would consider the matter, and at the same time expressed doubts about the efficacy of the treatment, and indicated scepticism generally. Being on sufficiently easy terms with the Chief of the Local Government Board—which office, by the way, he held for only six weeks—I wrote to Mr. Chamberlain saying that such scepticism could not be allowed, his education had clearly been neglected, and I could not permit such ignorance to go on! If he would fix a day to dine with us (we had not long before dined with him) I would invite some possible members of the Commission to meet him. A letter came by return of post fixing the day.

When the day came round—March 30th—Mr.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Chamberlain was no longer in office, but was nevertheless eager to begin his education, and could promise that all would go well.

Meanwhile the following letter came from Pasteur :—

Paris, March 21st, 1886.

MADAME,

I am much touched by the lively interest which you so kindly take in the foundation of the Pasteur Institute.

You have asked me to send a copy of my last lecture of March 1st at the Academy of Sciences to M. the Minister Chamberlain. I hastened to do so, but the same day learnt that M. Chamberlain had retired from the Ministry.

Of the English Commission of which they spoke in the House of Commons to come and take note of the results of my preventive treatment of rabies after bites I have not heard again.

I have meanwhile many of your Compatriots already treated or under treatment. They are doing well notwithstanding that among them are seven children who did not start for Paris till after the death of one of their comrades from rabies at Bradford. A charming family is also under treatment from Wimbledon, near London.

Meanwhile, the subscriptions for the new Institute progress very well. There is already collected more than five hundred thousand francs, if one includes the sum that is to be shortly voted in Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

If the sums received are sufficient I shall be

<sup>1</sup> The French Parliament.



## MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S LESSON

enabled to greatly develop the studies on virulent and contagious maladies.

Accept, dear Madame, for yourself and your dear husband, the new assurance of my most devoted sentiments.

L. PASTEUR.

I am at the 550th bitten person—not a check.

On the evening of the 30th our distinguished and much-esteemed friend Joseph Chamberlain arrived very late, and was presented to the men of science assembled to meet him. Round the table sat Sir James Paget (appointed President of the Commission), Professor Burdon Sanderson of Oxford (now Sir John), Dr. Lauder Brunton (now Sir Lauder), Professor Gerald Yeo of King's College, Victor Horsley, appointed Secretary (now Sir Victor), Sir Henry Roscoe, M.P., the Right Honourable Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. (now Sir) James Knowles (of "The Nineteenth Century"), and Sir Frederick Pollock. Professor Lister first accepted, and later declined, as he had to take his nephew abroad. A great many others came in the evening.

On entering the drawing-room after dinner, Mr. Chamberlain had the felicity of finding himself for the first time in his life in a veritable museum of living disease. On every side were glass tubes with nothing between himself and a variety of contagious diseases but cotton wool stoppers. Through the fibres of the wool the life-giving oxygen of the air could reach the microbes, but through the wool the microbes could not escape. They were safely imprisoned. There were also glass plates

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

smeared with gelatine and boiled potatoes, all of which were kept under glass covers. These substances afforded the suitable nourishment for bacteria of various kinds, some of which lived and reproduced their species in the presence of oxygen, and others without direct contact with oxygen.

Standing in the presence of this awe-inspiring and recently-discovered world, Chamberlain, a man of iron purpose, was not afraid. His education had begun !

My husband placed him in the hands of Dr. Burdon Sanderson, who took him round the room, explaining the tubes, the gelatine, the potatoes, and the microscopes, through which he could see the bacilli when taken fresh from the blood of disease-stricken man or animals. The intelligence of the pupil and the questions he asked soon astonished the master, and surprised those who were following the impromptu lecture. Needless to say, our friend went forth into the world again a wiser if not a better man.

When the Commission was ultimately appointed and the day fixed for the great inquiry in Paris, Dr. de Mussy invited the members to dine at his house in order to introduce them privately to Pasteur before the work began. Nothing ever gave him more pleasure than showing hospitality to his former friends and colleagues of England. The morning of the departure I received a telegram from Dr. Burdon Sanderson asking me to be at home about four o'clock, as he would be *en route* for Paris overnight. While we were sitting at

## THE PASTEUR COMMISSION

tea together discussing the whole thing, I was astonished to find how sceptical he was concerning the inoculations. He said he was not satisfied on scientific grounds.

On his return I found that all doubts had vanished, and that he in common with all the others were now believers and filled with admiration.

Paris, July 9th, 1887.

DEAR MADAME (wrote Pasteur a few weeks later),

Your last letter has given Mme. Pasteur, myself, and our children the greatest pleasure. In Paris also the report of the English Commission produced on the public, as in London, a very salutary effect. One has understood in it the worth of the contradictions and the falsehoods arriving from different points of the horizon against the method of "prophylaxie" of rabies.

The spite of all the hostile people taking part is carried to the downfall.

I am happy to signalize to you an act of grand and loyal independence by a man whom you esteem, M. Gueneau de Mussy. At the end of a meeting on Tuesday last at the Academy of Medicine, M. le Dr. — the "ignorant," who had just again shown his incompetence on the question, approached our doctor and held out his hand. "No, Sir," answered Gueneau de Mussy, "I will not shake hands with you ; you are a disgrace to our country." Before the attitude of M. de Mussy he could but retire grumbling, ashamed and confused. An eye-witness of the scene having recounted to me this act, which is an honour for M. Gueneau de Mussy, I hastened to

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

go and thank him and to carry him my sincere felicitations.

M. Gueneau de Mussy has, like you, dear Madame, spoken to me about a lecture at the Royal Institution. Ah! if my health allowed it, how happy I should be to respond to the invitation of the Director of this fine establishment. All the same, my desire at this moment is to be able to go in the autumn to thank in person the President Paget, M. Victor Horsley (Secretary), and all the members of the Commission.

Accept, dear Madame, for yourself and your dear husband the fresh assurance of my affectionate, devoted sentiments.

L. PASTEUR.

As the news of the new treatment spread, and people were arriving from Russia and all parts of the world to be inoculated, my husband was receiving private letters on behalf of our postmen and policemen begging cards of introduction to Pasteur that would admit them to his presence without delay. All this sort of correspondence was entrusted to me as my share of the busy work going on about us. It is interesting to reflect that at this period all nations found a welcome at the *Ecole Normale*, where they went through the series of inoculations in the chemical laboratory of the Ecole at the expense of the French Government. It was a wonderful bond of peace! Since then a fund has been established at the Mansion House to send people too poor to afford it over to Paris for the treatment.



## A MONUMENT TO PASTEUR

Meanwhile, the nations were combining to mark their gratitude by building a monument to Pasteur. Academic honours, costly gifts from crowned heads, and Orders—the highest that could be conferred—and medals of every kind had already been showered upon him. It was felt, however, that there ought to be a lasting monument; no mere erection of inanimate stone and marble; but an institution that would live, and be a centre of medical education for the highest intellects, the object of which would be fresh discoveries, tending to alleviate suffering and save unnecessary death.

## CHAPTER X

DURING the erection of the Institut in 1888 my daughter Jenny—"Mademoiselle Jennie," who was famous as a secretary—and I went over to Paris for a month to help the Pasteurs with the English correspondence concerning the rabbit question in Australia.

I do not purpose entering into this vexed question here, as it would involve an extra volume. It is sufficient to say that the destruction of the superfluous rabbits by contaminating their food with chicken cholera, as Pasteur proposed, would have been a painless death, and harmless in other ways, but more cruel methods were preferred and unhappily adopted.

It was at this period we saw the Institut for the first time. We had been present at an interesting *déjeuner* at the Ecole, and when all the guests had gone Pasteur expressed the wish to take us along to see the building. He accordingly escorted us downstairs to the carriage which had been placed at our disposal for the day by Madame Grancher, wife of Dr. Grancher, the first physician found with courage enough to make the first inoculation on the first human being ever inoculated with the virus of rabies. Had young Meister died after the treatment, Dr. Grancher—the man of faith and courage—would

## THE PASTEUR INSTITUTE

assuredly have been tried for manslaughter, and hundreds who were subsequently saved would have been doomed to suffer the cruellest of all deaths. After seeing us into our *coupé*, Pasteur himself followed in an open cab, although the day was cold and snow was on the ground. When we arrived on the spot the great chemist was so bent on explaining the plan of his new laboratory, that he was oblivious of the fact that he was paralyzed down the one side, owing, unhappily, to overwork during his Ferment researches. Fearlessly he led the way, and expected us to follow over beams and planks that bridged appalling gulfs and were open to the sky. When we all stood trembling on a quivering plank, Pasteur would calmly point out the walls of the dark chamber in which the virulent marrow of the rabbits' spinal cord was to be pounded up every morning for the inoculations. Along yonder passage were to be the laboratories for students, and if we would have the goodness to *turn round*, we should then see the outline of the great reception-hall for the patients!

We felt we were snatching a fearful joy, but he saw it not. On we went along the top of party walls, up in the air one moment, and down in the depths the next, till it was time to return to our carriage and go off on our contemplated round of visits. But, behold, when the gorgeous footman opened the door of the exquisite *coupé* we suddenly became aware of the state of our boots. Some workmen rushed forward with various implements to try to make them a little better, but Pasteur insisted we should return to the Ecole Normale to

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

get them properly cleaned. When we got there our anxious host went ranging about the back premises trying to find a servant, but they had all gone out, no one was in, so Pasteur himself did duty as shoe-black, adding this to his other accomplishments. He was a man so entirely without guile that he could not regard this action in any other light than one simple, natural, and unavoidable in the circumstances.

Before leaving Paris, Pasteur presented me with the bronze medal of the Academie des Sciences. Each member is presented with a limited number of these medals to give to friends as a memento. To Mademoiselle Jennie he gave a photograph of himself with an affectionate inscription.

After this visit I do not think I saw Pasteur again until I went with my husband and "Mademoiselle" to present the "Album Pasteur" to him on May 25th, 1890. The Institut was then in full working order and the residential part occupied by Pasteur and his wife.

The idea of getting up an Album was suggested to my mind by having seen a beautiful Album which was presented to Pasteur by the artists of Paris in recognition of his services to humanity. One could not be insensible to the fact that Pasteur's home in the midst of his terrible work was brightened by the gifts of all civilized nations save our own. Except for the Copley medal from the Royal Society there was nothing. Our subscription list towards the Institut was miserable. And all this time *la Rage* was prevalent in Great Britain, and the British were begging succour from France, and receiving it with



## THE ALBUM PASTEUR.

lofty indifference. In scientific circles alone was Pasteur's work understood and fully appreciated.

The Album, I considered, would not only give pleasure to the Pasteur family, but would serve as the thin edge of the wedge wherewithal to open the minds of the educated classes.

In September (1888) Dr. Priestley and myself were going to Washington to attend a Medical Congress, and I foresaw that my husband, being then *en fête* and no longer harassed with work, would be an invaluable aid in getting signatures, as he certainly proved to be. Hence I provided myself with many cardboard sheets, and many large envelopes in which they could be sent hither and thither to gather the signatures from all the Universities in the United States and Canada, as well as the names of those we met *en route*.

## CHAPTER XI

THE following September we were bounding across the Atlantic, enjoying ourselves, or otherwise, as circumstances would permit.

One charming feature of the voyage was the part-singing of the Welsh emigrants on board. As emigrants they were severely bureau'd, there was no malingering allowed, and nothing to beguile the weary hours. All were turned out of their cabins at a certain hour, and at a definite hour sent to bed. But before the bed hour came round the whole community would squat down on the deck, and with babies in laps and small children grouped about them, would fill the air with song, all falling into their parts as if they had been trained to sing together. I asked if they had all come from the same place, and had practised before, and was told that they had never met before, but all the Welsh could sing, and they all knew their native songs.

Sitting on the deck above and listening to this in the moonlight, with the ceaseless washing of the waves keeping time, was an experience I can never forget.

At last the day came when we had to part with our friends of the sea and our Welsh bards, and adjourn to a big hotel in New York. There we spent a day and night arranging for letters to be forwarded and

## MR. PIERPONT MORGAN

various other matters. Before leaving, we paid a visit to our friend Mr. Pierpont Morgan, whom we found in his office at the bank. We had known him hitherto in a sociable way at Dover House when he came to visit his father and mother, whom we counted amongst our most intimate friends. Here in the great bank we felt possessed with a sense of intrusion, owing to the bustle and business going on, and were on the point of leaving cards and walking off when we were ushered into the great financier's room. All our scruples quickly vanished before a most cordial reception, for our visit had been heralded by his father, who was anxious that America should make itself pleasant to us. Having accordingly arranged that we should pay a visit to himself and Mrs. Morgan at their country house near West Point, we took leave of the office with the pleasant sensation that life there was very human after all, and that our visit had not unhinged the affairs of the nation so much as we had feared!

Next morning we started for Boston *en route* to Beverley Farms to visit Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who was there with his daughter, Mrs. Sargent, for the summer and autumn. That we should spend our first week in the United States with them had long since been arranged. Two years previously, in 1886, we had seen them daily in London when they spent their "hundred days in Europe."

Before we arrived, Dr. Holmes had been warned by his medical attendant not to talk too much on account of his throat, but although we all did our best to enforce a little solitary and wholesome confinement to his own room, it was of no use. He was

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

always trying to obey orders, but repression only increased the overflow of his spirits, and out he would burst brimful of new ideas or some inimitable story, and charged with desire to hear others. The two physicians were such kindred spirits that there was no keeping them apart.

Beverley Farms was a delightful place for summer residence. It bordered the broad Atlantic, with islands lying off it here and there, and was in reality a great forest. I cannot remember ever seeing a farm or the original farms. In our drives through these enchanting woods we came upon lovely villas, every villa, in common with our own, having what they call a piazza. Our piazza was rendered fly-proof by a very light wire gauze, that enclosed it but did not obstruct the view nor yet the summer winds. There we used to spend the mornings resting or discussing the programme for the day, to the murmuring of the bees and mutterings of the wasps and other winged creatures trying vainly to get in. The whole house was fly-proof. The front door would quietly expand before you, and close itself again when you entered. A second door performed a similar service before you were actually within the house.<sup>1</sup> Every window was also fly-proof, and endowed with the power of regulating light, shade, or darkness, according to your will. Throughout the establishment there was much to learn and nothing to teach. And beyond the many evidences of high thinking, there was the simple life that suited us so well. No late dinners nor formalities of any sort. The home life went on as

<sup>1</sup> This was effected by a Morton's door check spring.



## DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

usual whoever came. The morning meal produced home-made bread, rolls, scones, and a variety of good dishes peculiar to the land. The evening meal was pastoral in its simplicity, the dish I best remember being milk-toast—a bowl of cut up fresh made toast, with hot milk poured over it. This was the innocent bowl over which our minds would wander to the memorable Hundred Days. From these peaceful surroundings a thousand brilliant scenes would rise before us, making us feel it was quite another world we were contemplating—one they would never see again, but which still awaited us for a time. How our dear host revelled in these memories !

Yes, over the milk-toast we roamed once more through marble halls, and many a glittering scene. There was the night we met at Lord Granville's reception at Carlton House Terrace.

Then there was the dinner at Archdeacon Farrar's, where the lions of science lay down with the lambs of theology, all bleating together in perfect harmony. Professor and Mrs. Huxley, Professor Tyndall, Sir John and Lady Millais, Mrs. Phelps and others were present. This dinner Wendell Holmes classed as "an event." A breakfast, a lunch, a tea he considered a circumstance, an occurrence in social life, but a dinner was an event. It was the "full-blown flower of that cultivated growth of which these lesser products are the buds."

There was an endless joy too in talking over the celebrated evening party they gave at our house, and the interesting incidents connected with it. One incident was rather curious. A gentleman I scarcely

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

knew myself, but who considered himself a great celebrity; came up to me and asked to be introduced to Lady Rosebery. I explained how impossible it was for me to take such a liberty, as I was not the hostess on this occasion, but I went up to Mrs. Sargent and mentioned the matter to her. As Lady Rosebery was standing close behind her she turned round and asked permission, mentioning the name of the celebrity. The answer was very plain. It was whispered into her ear, and was simply, "I will not."

"Oh, what am I to do?" exclaimed poor Mrs. Sargent, coming up to me; "Lady Rosebery said, 'I will not.'"

"Do nothing," said I.

When all the guests were gone, and about a dozen were left, we sat round the supper table for an hour enjoying the wit and humorous stories that poured from the brain of our delightful host.

The following is another reminiscence of that period which I have found in a letter written by myself to my aunt, Mrs. Wills, at the time:—

"On Sunday afternoon we had a very interesting levee. Dr. Wendell Holmes came to meet Sir James Paget and Sir William Gull. We formed a small group for conversation in the one room, while Flora and Jenny entertained the usual Sunday casuals over the tea table in the next. *They* numbered over twenty.

"In the end Dr. Wendell Holmes declared himself much impressed with Paget, but puzzled by Gull, who was very enigmatical. Sir William (Gull) laid it down that medicine was the mother of all sciences,

## THE AUTOCRAT

and that a tablet to that effect should be placed in the College of Physicians. Some of us objected, and maintained that medicine as a science began with Pasteur, for although the use of drugs might have been known to the ancients, the earliest of all sciences was astronomy. Presently Dr. Holmes, in his amusing way, gave the conversation a turn by saying the earliest medical advice ever given—on a person taking poison—was *to spit it out!*

“The Autocrat has a great sense of the ludicrous, and is very bright and animated. He knew my father in America, and was full of *The Vestiges*. Altogether it was a charming afternoon.”

But to return from Hertford Street to Beverley Farms at a bound. I was sitting one morning on the lawn, chatting with our friend out in the open among the bees and butterflies, when I began idly to flick away a little twig lying in front of us with the point of my parasol. We were not thinking of the twig at all, but were presently startled to find it had sprung into life, and developed legs, and was hopping away across the grass. The next moment I had captured it as an interesting trophy and specimen of the “mimic” creatures. “Ah, you poor, sly, little twig!” I apostrophized. “How marvellous are the ways of the God of Nature, who endowed you with a power greater than that of all the actors the world has known! The pantomime that transforms a man into a cat, a Cinderella into a princess, is poor compared to your transformation from a bit of dead wood to a living creature, with a nervous system of some kind to enable you to earn a living, and reproduce your species from one generation to

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

another! And there you lay at our feet, just a little common twig, brown, motionless, and without charm. Ah, therein lay your artfulness and profound wisdom; no charm; nothing to attract unwelcome attentions; a true philosopher, exciting no jealousy; wishing only to be left in peace."

Thus we sat on, twig in hand, philosophizing about the means of self-defence given to the creatures of the earth, the air, the sea, throughout nature.

Before closing this chapter, I must quote a few lines from a letter addressed to my husband the following Christmas by the Autocrat:—

"We have had lots of Christmas presents, none more welcome than a drum full of mistletoe and holly from a kind English friend who has kept us supplied with them in past years. Such dear remembrances as they are of our darling *old home*—and then—and then—our charming friends smile on us so benignantly as we distribute them.

"I wonder whether the pious old customs of England are still observed. I don't know anything that pleases our pretty women more than a gift of a bough of mistletoe—so suggestive, you know, even to the iciest of vestals, who looks as if she had slept in the refrigerator. . . . ."

Before me lie many delightful letters from both father and daughter; but innocent joys do not alone fill the pages, for to them, as to all, come sorrows. Only seven months after our visit the two who were so much one, and everything to each other, were parted by death. "It is too true,"—writes Dr. Holmes on April 30th—"my much-loved daughter



## CO-EVALS OF 1809

was taken from me on the 3rd of April, after nearly two months' illness. . . ."

The last letter he ever wrote to my husband was dated 1893, about fifteen months before his death, which took place quite quietly when sitting in his easy chair.

The letter is very cheerful, but handwriting shaky. I give the last paragraph :—

"Pray do not think you must thank me for the hymn I sent you, or criticize, or praise it. I want you to know that I am still *compos mentis*. I regret to hear from Mr. Besant (Sir Walter) that my Paris fellow-student of 1833-5, Walter Hayle Walshe, is dead. My great co-evals of 1809 are all gone but Gladstone, Tennyson, and Darwin."

Thus ended a friendship that still lives for me on the "outspread wings of Memory."

## CHAPTER XII

WASHINGTON and the Congress still lay before us, both big.

The change from the simple New England home life, where everything breathed of peace and absence from strife, was bewildering. In sending forth the tendrils of my memory there is little to take hold of. The White House opened its doors to a reception held by Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland one afternoon. The local physicians kept open house morning, noon, and night, and the usual magnificent hospitalities went on.

The most restful pleasures were those for which I was best fitted, and as Princess Henrietta of Schleswig Holstein, wife of Professor von Esmarck of Kiel, believed herself to be on the same plane as myself physically, we arranged to take quiet country drives together in the various carriages placed at our disposal by friends. We were thrown so much together on this and subsequent occasions that we became very friendly, and kept up a correspondence afterwards for years. She was greatly interested to hear how kind her sister-in-law, the Princess Christian, had been to me at Cannes in 1871, the year of her marriage when all the world was talking about it. It was the same year the Prince of Wales so nearly died of typhoid fever at Sandringham and

## PRINCESS CHRISTIAN

afterwards came on to Cannes during his convalescence. I was a great invalid then, and spent my days lying under a canopy out on the balcony from which I could see the Princess Christian's villa in the valley down below.

After one of her informal visits, she came upon my two little girls in the garden one day and asked Jenny—aged six—if she took care of mother.

“Yes, sometimes,” was the candid reply.

“What, not always?” asked the Princess in astonishment.

“Well,” explained Jenny, still with strict regard to truth, “not when people come in, for mother does not like it then, but *I always make her better.*”

A few such anecdotes always delighted Princess Henrietta, who professed the greatest love and admiration for her brother's wife.

On leaving Washington we travelled with the Von Esmarcks and a few others to Baltimore to visit the Johns Hopkins Hospital—the most advanced in the world. As it was finished, but not yet opened, we could freely inspect the wonderful mechanism for simplifying labour, and the disinfecting and sanitary arrangements which were perfect.

From thence to Philadelphia, a delightful city. Here the pleasant drives with the Princess were resumed when time permitted, but the Congress being over, we had to take our more independent ways in visiting the hospitals, medical schools, and other institutions. Among the friends who showed us great attention were Dr. and Mrs. Thomson and Mr. Geo. W. Childs, proprietor of “The Ledger” newspaper. He had an immense publishing office

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

full of the usual business of a daily paper, but in the thick of the rush his own private sanctum stood serene. Here he had entertained my father and mother years ago, and here he now entertained us with many delightful reminiscences. Before we left we were shown a large tray full of china cups and saucers, no two being alike, and told each to select the specimen we liked best as a memento of local manufacture. He never allowed any stranger from across the mill-pond to go away without a cup and saucer ! He was associated in some way, I cannot remember how, with the bank of Drexel-Morgan, and invited us there to lunch one day. This was a very pleasant affair, for I was presented by one of the Drexel brothers with an enormous fortune which I held in the palm of my hand and felt a millionaire, although my fortune was no sooner attained than it was lost again, like many other fortunes less easily acquired.

One morning, about nine o'clock, we were sitting quietly at breakfast in our hotel when a young medical assistant from one of the hospitals rushed in, saying breathlessly, " You must come to the hospital at once, not a moment to lose. The patients have just come in from the peach-growing districts with malaria, and if you wish to see the parasites in the crescent stage of their existence you must come."

My husband mildly inquired if they would not keep !

" Oh no," said the student, " they are disappearing now, for they—the patients—have all been saturated with quinine already ! "



## MALARIA MICROBES

In not many minutes we were both in the laboratory, spell-bound to a row of microscopes which were being supplied with fresh drops of blood taken from the fingers of the sufferers in the wards. There for the first time we saw the crescents but no other developments of their life history.

In the hospital for tropical diseases at the Albert Docks I have since then seen the various stages of the life history of this microbe, now so distinguished in connection with the mosquito. The life cycle of this parasite is one of the marvels of medical research and curiosities of science.

We were now bent on visiting the grave of Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen and great-grand-uncle of my husband, and started on September 25th for Northumberland, the place of his exile and death. Mr. Frank Thomson, vice-president of the line, had kindly placed his private car at the disposal of Professor and Mrs. Ferrier, who were going on to Chicago, and we were to accompany them so far on the way. The vice-president, his brother, Dr. Thomson, Mrs. Thomson, other members of the family, and Dr. Osler came to see us off.

We soon realized the fact that we were travelling in great luxury and style. At one o'clock the *factotum*, a black man, sent us in a beautifully cooked luncheon consisting of split grilled chickens, sweetbreads, green peas, other trifles, and sherry, champagne and fruit.

At 6.30 we parted with our fellow-travellers, and, leaving all comfort behind, plunged into desolation. Nobody seemed to want us. When we got to the inn there was not a soul to receive us. There was

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

a church festival going on and we were quite in the way. So we wandered through the deserted kitchen, looking for food and finding none. The fire and all the servants were out. At last a man from somewhere dropped in, and, hearing what we wanted, proceeded to light the fire and boil some eggs, and, hunting about till he found some bread and a few plates, threw them anyhow on the kitchen table and advised us to make the best of it—which we did.

The bedroom which ought to have expected us and didn't, was a dilapidated chamber, bereft of all the usual accessories of a bedroom. No water in the jugs, no one to bring water, didn't know where to find any. To ring the bell was impossible. There were no bells. So just as we were, with the dust of travel upon us, we strolled out to look up our relations.

Mrs. Priestley and her two daughters—one called Janet—received us most kindly and begged us to take up our quarters with them, but this friendly offer we felt we could not accept. They were the fourth generation in direct descent from the great chemist,—eldest son of eldest son straight down the line.

Next morning they drove us in their carriage to the grave of Joseph Priestley in the new cemetery to which his remains were carried from the original resting-place in the middle of the town. One little rose bush was growing up beside the memorial tablet, and from it I gathered a few leaves for the Pasteur Album, knowing the high esteem which the living chemist held for the dead. The ground was well kept, and beautifully situated facing the Blue

## NORTHUMBERLAND, U.S.A.

Hills, and overlooking a bend of the wide and tranquil Susquehanna river. Then we went to see the house where Joseph Priestley, F.R.S., LL.D., lived and died in exile. The laboratory was now in use as an outhouse, and was full of gardener's tools, but the instruments he used were carefully preserved in the National Museum at Washington.

Close beside me, where I write, stands a singularly pretty oval Sheraton card table that belonged to Priestley, and was part of the furniture of this very house. After his death it was sold along with many other things, and happened to be bought by the aunt of Mr. Bayard, at the time of the sale. The aunt left this table to her nephew, and when he became United States' Ambassador and we made his acquaintance in London, he determined in his turn to leave the table to us. After his death it was forwarded by his widow, who stated that it stood by his bedside during his last illness, and that he had found pleasure in thinking it would descend in time to our son Joseph, and be treasured as a family relic. It now has a brass plate on it recording the history.

After our drive, we dined with the Priestley family at the good old-fashioned hour of twelve. According to my notes, it was a most elegant repast, with ices and cakes made at home. The house was very roomy, comfortable, and old-fashioned. Everything was quaint and old world, even to the serving-maid, who took such a deep interest in the family that she was always coming in to sit down and enjoy the conversation when she had nothing else to do. In one of the

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

rooms hung an original painting of Priestley by Stuart.

The object of our visit to this place—the last stronghold of the Indians—having been successfully accomplished, we proceeded on our journey to Canada, resting a night at a lovely place *en route*, called The Glen. It was simply an hotel overlooking Lake Seneca and the deep gorge which is the picturesque *raison d'être* of its existence. The residential part of the hotel was on one side of the gorge and the restaurant on the other, so that for meals we had always to cross the bridge which united the two sides. The dinner hour closed at three, when tea set in till seven, after which everything was supper. There was abundance at each meal, and there was no mistake about the charge, for one dollar (four shillings) per meal whatever it was, covered everything.

We were now in the first week of October, had left snow behind in Canada, and arrived at the fashionable summer resort Lennox, Berks. We took up our quarters at a large hotel which was in the uncomfortable stage of gradually closing up for the winter. As our friend Lady Nicholson had given us an introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Shattuck, who had a residence there, my husband wandered out soon after our arrival to find the house and leave the letter and cards. When he rang the bell the door was immediately opened by Mr. Shattuck himself, who at once invited him into the hall, where the family were sitting at tea. Long before they knew who he was, or how he had come there, they were cordially greeting him and offering tea, but when



## THE SHATTUCKS

the letter was read and they realized there was a wife in the background they wanted first to detain my husband, and secondly to send their carriage off there and then to fetch me. However, when it was explained that I was suffering from a cold and had gone to bed, they agreed to send the carriage next morning. Accordingly next morning the carriage and Mr. Shattuck duly arrived, and I was soon released from the discomfort of hotel life and plunged into the midst of family life, luxury, and pleasure. The Americans do not seem to know the meaning of the word "stranger." There is no such thing to them. They are all so friendly that any stiffness or formality would be thrown away, indeed they would be too busy in making you happy and comfortable to notice it.

My instantaneous friend Mrs. Shattuck escorted me to my room, chatting all the way, telling me about the members of the family staying with them at present, and that Madame this and Signor that were coming to sing to them at a concert she was giving that afternoon. They were expected to arrive presently from New York.

After lunch a scene of animation, gaiety, and delightful music soon filled the day.

In the stables were carriages of every kind and horses for everybody. We had only to say whether we desired a Victoria, a brougham, or a four-in-hand. As a rule every variety came round to the door at once to suit the several visitors.

The master of the house generally drove me out in his phaeton. When we were riding along the roads one day I was struck with the quantity of

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

apples lying every here and there in the water of the gutters, and innocently inquired if they were there to be washed? He was much amused, and explained that in Yankee land the apples grew in such profusion it was not worth anyone's while to gather what fell from the trees!

We also had introductions to Mrs. Whitney, and Mrs. Sloane, the daughter of Mr. Vanderbilt, and received much kindness from them.

Our next visit was to Mr. and Mrs. Pierpont Morgan in their charming country house near West Point.

Here all was simplicity once more. We felt back in New England again. No ostentation, no formality, just the sweet home life and unaffected delightful daughters.

After this to New York, where we spent our last fortnight with Dr. and Mrs. Fordyce Barker, who entertained us with all the town festivities they could think of. At their house we met our friend, Dr. John Metcalfe, whom we had seen often and admired so much in our own country. He took us to Tiffany's one day, and presented me with a silver bowl of exquisite workmanship, and another of porcelain, just to show what the Yankees could do.

Before leaving these hospitable shores we received a packet of "Yankee notions" from Dr. Wendell Holmes. Here is the list of notions:—

Mrs. McGregor's family nail-box containing 400 steel white nails, &c.

Two automatic mucilage pencils.

Box of pure rubber finger-shields for penholders.

## “YANKEE NOTIONS”

A silver tongue-scraper, similar to one he always used himself.

Then books, poems, &c.

“With kindest and grateful regards from the author.”

These are enshrined in my library, but the most sacred of these little mementoes is the one sent after his death by his son the Judge. It is a little square of plate glass from the window of his studio at Boston through which he loved to gaze at the river Charles, and on it is engraved a quotation from one of his poems :—

My airy oriel on the river shore.

To me it is the magic crystal into which I have only to look to see Beverley Farms, and the dear kind faces which recall some of the happiest memories of a lifetime.

## CHAPTER XIII

It was not until the spring of 1890 that the Pasteur Album was sufficiently advanced for presentation. It had meanwhile afforded my husband and myself the greatest interest and pleasure throughout our wanderings in the United States and Canada. The various Professors of distant Universities, whom we met at the Congress, volunteered to carry off sheets to be covered with the signatures of their confrères, and the interest and sympathy excited everywhere seemed to form a "brotherhood of science" extending all over the globe. Dr. Wendell Holmes undertook Boston, which was supposed to be the place superior to all other places in the world. So much so that *their* cuckoos would never say "To who" but "To whom"! Our friend loved the conceits of Boston.

Among others who afforded me valuable assistance with the Album were Sir James Paget, who approached the Prince and Princess of Wales. Then Mrs. Max Müller undertook Oxford and Glasgow, and Lord Watson the peers. Here he encountered various difficulties, as many required first to see the dedication, which I had to press forward and send. "Those who declined to sign were most civil," wrote Lord Watson on March 31st, "and amusingly various." Several were altogether



## THE PASTEUR ALBUM

opposed, others "made a point of never signing anything of that kind," others "if their wives heard of it they would have no peace," others "had a great respect for Pasteur, but had declined to subscribe to the Mansion House fund, and therefore thought it better not to sign." One peer of the highest rank said "he had become too old and indolent to trouble himself with such matters."

Nevertheless, the page of peers came out well, as also the Commons, most of whom begged that they should never be betrayed, as their signature on such a document, if published, might go against them at an election! So much for the encouragement of science!

When the signatures were complete, and the beautiful drawings, contributed by some of our leading artists, were mounted to adorn the whole, it occurred to me that beyond all this there was something further to say. Accordingly, the Album was made to tell its own story, and describe its sojourn in all the Universities. Also its detention at Marlborough House, and its rescue by Sir James Paget, who chanced to meet the Prince of Wales, and respectfully mentioned it. His Royal Highness begged for another week as the Princess was copying the beautiful head drawn by Sir Frederick Leighton, and it took time.

The story was written in English and French, and formed a second volume.

At last the day arrived—it was May 25th when my husband, Mademoiselle Jenny and myself, started forth on our self-imposed mission to show the French that there were a few English who knew

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

how to appreciate the researches and marvellous discoveries of Pasteur.

When we arrived at the Institute we found the family party awaiting us in the drawing-room, and we met with a cordial greeting. Unfortunately, Madame Pasteur could not appear as she was confined to bed, suffering from inflammation of the veins of her leg, which followed a little wound in her foot.

It had been arranged that there was to be no fuss, no formality, all was to be simple and quiet for Pasteur's sake as his work was telling seriously on his health. So there were assembled Lord Lytton, the British Ambassador, who at that time alone could give permits for inoculation to British subjects, unless they came with private introductions; his daughter, Lady Betty Balfour, Sir Frederick and Lady Pollock, Louisa Lady Pollock, the Hon. Dr. Alan Herbert, and Madame de Mussy. When everything was ready Pasteur and I sat down together in front of a little table, on which the two volumes had been placed, and the rest of the company sat about the room. Our friend Mr. Ellicot then came forward and read the speech he had prepared in French, during which Pasteur sat quietly weeping all the time. When this little ceremony was over, I opened the Album and soon enlisted his interest, and restored his cheerfulness by showing him Frank Lockwood's caricature of the Right Hon. Henry Chaplin in a muzzle, carrying out practically his views in favour of the muzzling order. Also the signatures of the Prince and Princess of Wales (now our King and Queen) under the following inscription :—

## THE PASTEUR ALBUM

“A ce grand Monsieur Pasteur le bienfaiteur de la race humaine.”

This was in the handwriting of the Princess herself.

To wind up the proceedings, my daughter went to the piano and played the lovely piece composed by Lady Thompson for the Album, expressive of the sympathy of one who was paralyzed towards another similarly afflicted.

After a little interlude of gay talk, Pasteur gave me his arm, and led me to the dining-room for tea *à l'Anglais*. I now had the pleasure of making Lord Lytton's acquaintance for the first time, and amused him with my reminiscences of his father when he used to exercise his powers of darkness over us at Doune Terrace long ago.

Before leaving, Madame Vallery-Radot took us upstairs to see her mother, whom we found in excellent spirits, although she was not allowed to rise. It was not a little strange to reflect that she was the only woman in the world occupying a bedroom which was the gift of all nations!

The last time I met Pasteur was five years later at Villeneuve l'Etang, a curious long straggling villa on the outskirts of Paris. It was formerly occupied by the Cent Gardes, who laid down their lives for their King—Louis XVI. The stables were now occupied by a hundred horses, whose mission was to give up a portion of their blood that human beings might be saved from the effects of diphtheria. Dr. Roux, one of Pasteur's ablest assistants, had worked out the subject at the Institute, and it was here that the diphtheritic anti-toxin was prepared, and sent

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

out far and wide to be inoculated into the veins of human beings when the disease was declared.

To me it was not a little curious to reflect that thirty-two years previously my husband was enduring all the agony of this disease within easy reach of this place where the prophylaxy was now prepared. While idly sitting on the sunny terrace at Bellevue, waiting for Nature to perform her slow and difficult cure, we little dreamt that just over there, where we could point with the finger, lay the Palace of the Tuileries, where Pasteur, about that very time, was assuring the Emperor that his great ambition was to "arrive at the knowledge of the causes of putrid and contagious diseases," an ambition he lived to realize.

It had been previously arranged that Madame de Mussy was to drive me in her Victoria out to Garches to pay this little visit. When we got there we were warmly received by the members of the family, who dropped in singly, the one going out as the other came in. They were all on duty as nurses, for "the dear and great" was failing. Behind their gladness there lurked a sadness which no effort could conceal. We felt afraid to stay, but were not allowed to leave, for Pasteur was bent on coming in to see us. Dr. Grancher had that morning been consulted as to the advisability of the visit, and had cheered them all up by declaring it would do him good.

At last the door opened, and a family group appeared, bearing along a helpless mass of something. It could not be Pasteur! "Ah, Madame!"



## DEATH OF PASTEUR

came a difficult voice from the mass as I moved forward to meet him.

I was too much overwhelmed with grief to utter a word, and my companion had shrunk back dumb.

Alas, the change ; the sacrifice to save the lives of others !

They placed him on a chair and he tried to speak, but the articulation was affected, and only his devoted nurses could understand a word he said. He was inquiring after *le Docteur*, and his friend *Mademoiselle Jenny*. Then he tried to say something about the most recent discoveries.

It was evident that our visit could not be prolonged, so trying to look cheerful we took our last farewell of our dear and valued friend.

I can see now the grey face under the black silk skull-cap he used to wear ; the helpless and shrunk figure in dressing gown ; and the loving family group by which he was surrounded.

He died in this simple abode on September 28th, 1895.

France, full of universal appreciation, was plunged into mourning, and resolved to give him a state funeral.

A few days after his death I received a letter from *Madame de Mussy*, in which she says, "I was thinking of you as I do often, and the grief the death of poor Pasteur must be for you, when your letter was brought up to me. I am going to write to see either *Madame Pasteur* or *Madame Vallery-Radot*, and I will tell them all that you say. They have certainly rendered justice to Pasteur, and made him a funeral he well deserved. Some papers don't

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

speak at all of his Christian feelings and of his Christian life. They are rather vexed, I think, to find in such a great savant, at the same time such a Christian man."

I need not dwell on a ceremonial that filled the papers at the time. Sufficient to say that the body was taken to Notre Dame, where it was to remain in one of the chapels till a tomb could be prepared under the Institute. A year and a half later when all was ready for the final removal, I received the following letter from Madame Vallery-Radot :—

14, rue de Grenelle, Paris.

October 3rd, 1896.

DEAR MADAME,

The date of the ceremony for the removal of my father's body into the Pasteur Institute crypt is fixed for Saturday, December 26th, it will be of a half official, half private character. We are very much afraid that this date, being the day following Christmas, will interfere with your and M. Priestley's coming. But it has been impossible to hasten or delay this ceremony. The works at the crypt have only just been finished, and as the 27th—my father's birthday—falls on a Sunday, we have been obliged to fix the date no later than the 26th.

In accordance with the wish that you expressed fourteen months ago to M. Vallery-Radot, he went the day before yesterday to inform Dr. Alan Herbert of the day fixed. We understand the impossibility of your being able to come with regret, but we beg of you, dear Lady Priestley, to think of us on the day that will be so terrible for us. My mother and

## FUNERAL OF PASTEUR

husband join me in asking you and M. Priestley to accept the expression of our deep affection.

Kindest remembrances to Miss Priestley,

M. L. PASTEUR-VALLERY-RADOT.

We had determined that nothing should prevent us attending the private funeral when it came off. We had long been invited, and Jenny and myself of all their friends were the only ladies asked to be present.

It happened that we were going to spend the Christmas at Cannes, so that the time of the funeral caused us no inconvenience. On letting them know that we should be in Paris, a large black-edged *carte d'entrée* was forwarded for "Madame et Mademoiselle Priestley," without which we could not have gained admission to the ceremony in the cathedral.

My husband was to represent the Edinburgh University, and read an address at the Institute. The family alone, with the exception of my daughter and myself, were to be present at Nôtre Dame and take part in the cortège.

The following letter which I wrote at the time to my son Robert, gives an account of the ceremony :—

Hotel Bellevue, Cannes,

December 28th, 1896.

Between Amiens and Paris the country was white with snow and the weather misty and cold.

Next morning Jenny and I were called at 6.30, and had an early breakfast before starting for Notre Dame. When we got there the Pasteurs had not arrived, indeed, we had mistaken the hour and were too soon.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

However, there was an official at the door, who told us to walk in. The big place so full of historical associations looked weird in the grey mist with candles lighting up the catafalque in front of the altar. We took a walk round and came upon the side chapel where the body of Pasteur was still lying awaiting the ceremony about to take place. The central part of the cathedral was screened round and laid out with seats, and as one or two draped figures had arrived we followed them and sat down. Presently the Pasteurs came on the scene and knelt on the prie-dieus near the altar, and we were told to move up there and join them. After a little the whole party with us at the tail moved up to the side chapel, and there Madame Pasteur, her daughter and grand-daughter knelt down again while we all stood round. When they rose up and moved aside, the carriers stepped forward, folded up the velvet covering, and bore away the coffin to the catafalque, into which it was placed for the rest of the religious ceremony. We all followed the coffin in procession, and occupied the same seats again in front of the altar, Jenny and I being the farthest back, and nearest the end of the catafalque, where we could watch the whole proceeding. Just as we were arranging ourselves, a procession of priests came round the back of the altar, the little gates were closed against the public, and the Chanted Mass began, the priests taking the Sacrament, the boys swinging incense burners about, and the whole ceremony most impressive. Half an hour ago, when we first arrived it was a scene of cold desolation, only a sprinkling of the poorest of God's creatures



## FUNERAL OF PASTEUR

kneeling here and there before an altar, now all was ecclesiastical grandeur, the organ rolling forth the most beautiful music, and the voices of the choir filling the place with divine melody. During the service solos were sung, and the violoncello and other instruments accompanied. In the midst of it all, bells were ringing at the altar for the elevation of the host, and the priests walked round the catafalque, at the end of which stood a priest holding a silver crucifix, to which they all bowed and crossed themselves. When the service was over, the carriers again appeared and drew out the coffin, which they proceeded to carry towards the door, followed by the priests and all the mourners, Jenny and I being at the end. The coffin was now resting on trestles, and each one as they filed past sprinkled it with holy water from a silver instrument passed from one to the other, we doing as the others did. The family were now drawn up at the side, Baptiste (the son) holding out his hand to us in friendly greeting. So I shook hands with him, and soon found myself embraced warmly and tearfully by Madame Pasteur and her daughter, Madame Radot. The coffin was now carried out and placed in a plain hearse, and the black coaches all came up one after the other, and carried us slowly along to the Rue Dutot. We were in the last coach with M. Laurent and M. Loir (cousin and nephew). When we arrived at the Institute the hearse drew up at the grand entrance, where all the officials formed into a semicircle to receive the coffin, but Madame Pasteur and we women of the party drew up at a side door, and went straight on to the crypt

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

to await the coffin. Descending the marble steps, we seemed to be leaving earth altogether and entering the gates of Paradise, for anything more strangely beautiful and ethereal I never saw. The general effect was that of lightness, truly celestial, no gloom anywhere, except in the robes of us six women standing against the marble walls in front of the sarcophagus. In the dome above was a cupola of transparent Algerian onyx, through which streamed artificial light, like the sun, and round the dome in the roof were the figures of Faith, Hope, Charity and Science, exquisitely carried out. It was a marvellous example of what love and art together could do. No royal tomb ever made could match it.

Presently the coffin was carried down and placed in its last resting-place, in front of us, followed by the men of the family and a long string of officials. When all was over, we went into the drawing-room, and had a most affecting and affectionate interview with Madame Pasteur and the family. Madame Radot simply sobbed on my shoulder and could not control herself.

In the afternoon we had visits at our hotel from M. Baptiste Pasteur and M. Vallery-Radot. Also from M. Loir and Madame de Mussy.

We left Paris in cold raw weather, and arrived here in brilliant sunshine yesterday. Our rooms are delightful, and we shall do well here.

Ever affectionately,

YOUR MOTHER.

Send this on to Flora and Eliza Mills along with  
*Le Temps*.

## MADAME PASTEUR

Although the final ceremony was private, all the Universities had sent delegates. A tribune had been erected at the entrance to the tomb, and from it the various addresses were read or verbally delivered, Sir Joseph Lister reading his in French.

Now all was over, and the widow was left alone, the guardian of the key which locked the gates of her paradise. The new head of the Institute, Dr. Duclaux, and his second in command, Dr. Roux, refused to allow her to give up her rooms. So there she still lives, taking an active interest in the work going on around her during the day. But when all is quiet at night, and the few domestics have retired to their quarters round about, it is curious to think what these midnight hours must be.

Above and all around her are the chambers of disease. Outside the yelping of mad dogs may break the awful silence, and close beside her is the tomb wherein lies the dead body of the man whom she adored !

To most women such surroundings would be a terror, but with a mind so imbued with the lofty calling of her husband's work no other thought than that of pride and thankfulness could find a place.

From this strange home she wrote me the following letter the year after her husband's death :—

January 2nd, 1897.

DEAR LADY PRIESTLEY,<sup>1</sup>

Thank you so much for your remembrance of the ceremony in which we were so pleased to see

<sup>1</sup> My husband by this time had received the honour of knighthood.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

you take part. Our beloved tomb is still visited by many people, and on every side we are congratulated on having found an architect who has turned to account so ably the task we committed to him. Yesterday—for the New Year—I had the good news of hearing that Baron Hirsch is giving a present of frs. 2,000,000 to the Pasteur Institute. My dear husband would have been so delighted with this gift, which will enable his followers to continue in the path he marked out for them with an ease he never knew. I shall expect Sir Dyce Duckworth the day you tell me, with pleasure, and I shall hasten to show him everything about which you have written to me. It will probably be Wednesday morning I shall give notice of his visit to one of those gentlemen who will explain everything to him.

Thank you so much for your kind thought of asking us to England next August. If this plan could be carried out all together it will be very nice.

Accept our feeling of affection for you and yours, dear Lady Priestley.

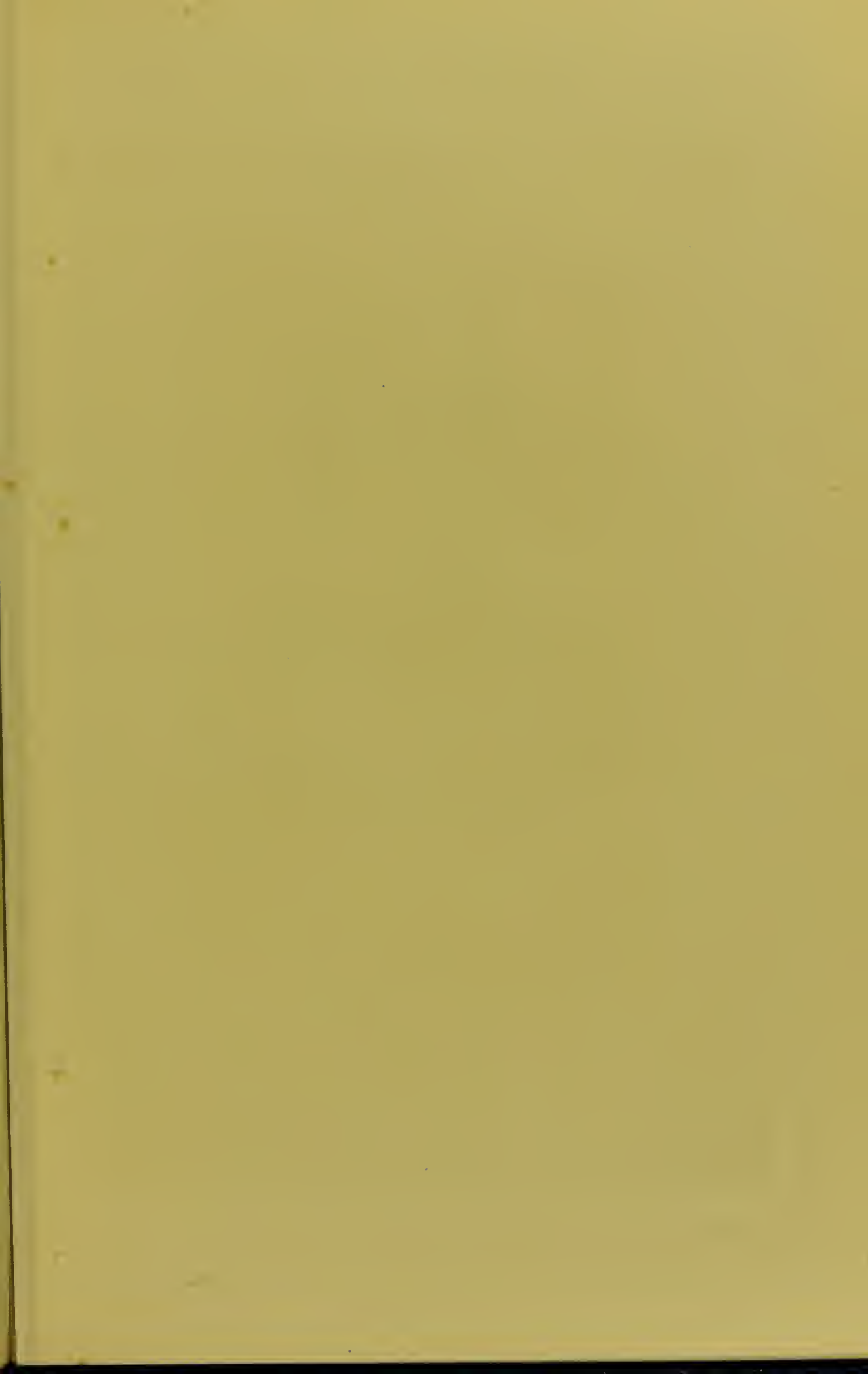
MARIE PASTEUR.

Guizot, in his "History of Civilization," writes :—

"No one can say why a great man appears at a certain epoch, and what he adds to the development of the world ; that is a secret of Providence ; but the fact is not less certain."

In the regret one feels for the loss of a friend there is immense consolation to be found in the fact that his name must live for ever.







Paul & Co. Photo.

W. & A. Photo.

*Sir William Overend Priestley*  
*M.D., L.L.D., M.P.*







## CHAPTER XIV

It was in the month of May, 1893, that my husband happened to meet Sir Andrew Clark (who at that time was President of the Royal College of Physicians) and stopped to have a chat. Before parting, Sir Andrew asked in a casual way, "By-the-bye, have you had a letter from Mr. Gladstone?"

"No," no letter had arrived, and the matter was forgotten till a few days later when *the* letter arrived. It ran thus :—

10, Downing Street, Whitehall,  
May 31st, 1893.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you that her Majesty the Queen has empowered me to propose to you that you should receive the honour of knighthood; and I trust it may be agreeable to you to accept the proposal, which I now tender in pursuance of her Majesty's gracious permission.

I remain, faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

My husband now understood the significance of Sir Andrew's inquiry, and it was quite characteristic of his simplicity of nature that the question aroused neither shrewd suspicion nor curiosity at

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

the time. Consequently it fell like a bolt from the blue at the moment we were starting out to an evening party in Belgrave Square. On arriving there, the first person we met was Mr. Spencer Lyttelton, whom we knew to be at the back of all such bewildering secrets. With him my husband had a friendly talk, and next morning had a long conference with Sir Andrew, which determined him to accept the honour offered.

On the 11th of the following August the ceremony of "kissing the Queen's hand" took place at Osborne. Exactly three months later, on November 11th, our good friend Sir Andrew was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, Mr. Gladstone being one of the pall-bearers. It was strange to reflect that among all the physicians assembled there was not one who had the power to save a life crushed out under the stress and strain of overwhelming work.

Not much more than a year before his death he had purchased the beautiful property of Camfield, in Hertfordshire, not far from Sherrards; and in the days of Sherrards I once drove over with my aunt, Mrs. Wills, to call on the Potters, to whom it then belonged. I did not know at that time what I have since ascertained through the "books wherein we find the dead living," that this place was sold to William Priestley, Esq., an ancestor of my husband, by a Mr. Potter in 1627. It then descended to his son Thomas, and from Thomas to his son William, who died without issue in 1744. After passing through other hands, it was purchased again by the Potters, who sold it to Sir Andrew Clark.

## HONOUR OF KNIGHTHOOD

Although I have known Lady Roscoe, who was a Miss Potter, of Camfield, for some years, it is strange that the subject never came up, and that I should not have discovered, save for Chauncey's "History of Hertfordshire," that the Priestleys and the Potters lie side by side in the old parish church. Under a "fair monument" lies William Priestley, with his family history inscribed thereon, and under the old engraving of Camfield are the words :—

TO YE WORPLL. THOMAS PRIESTLEY  
OF CAMFIELD PLACE, &c.

THIS DRAUGHT IS HUMBLY PRESENTED BY J. DRAPENTIER.

Headed by the crest and armorial bearings of my husband's family.

Thus through my books I find that the Priestleys and the Potters have been linked together at Camfield for centuries, and that the Clarks came in at the end to make it their home, a home in which Sir Andrew hoped to find rest but found it not.

## CHAPTER XV

ONE day in April, 1896, I was strolling up and down the corridor outside the ladies' grille in the House of Commons, waiting to hear a debate in which I was interested. Presently Sir Frederick Cook came along, and remarked cheerfully that he was delighted to hear that Sir William Priestley was going to join them and become an M.P. Never having heard the smallest whisper of this, I inquired pleasantly if he could mention the constituency about to be thus honoured?

"Oh, it is quite true," he added, "I have just heard it from Sir William himself down in the lobby."

"Was he there?" I asked.

"Yes, and looking for you; will you come?"

I was accordingly taken by the member for South London through many long passages, down several staircases, and past innumerable policemen till eventually the aspiring M.P. was found.

Yes, it was true. He had met his friend Sir James Crichton Browne, at the Athenæum Club, and after a close and confidential talk had promised at least to turn the matter over in his mind. So here was my M.D. being persuaded by his friends to allow himself to be nominated for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews on the Conservative side and become an M.P. My first instinct was



## PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE

against it on account of his health. His life had been an arduous one, with broken rest for many years, and we had begun to enjoy the sense of leisure that retirement from active practice brings. The late hours, the committees, the excitement of the battle-ground, I feared, would be more than he could bear.

The very fact that he had retired, and now enjoyed an independent position, was considered one of the necessary qualifications. Further, the Universities were bent this time on having a member of the Medical Profession to represent them, instead of a member of the Bar as hitherto for so many years. The present vacancy had come about through the promotion of Sir Charles Pearson to the Bench. Needless to say, all my objections were soon overcome by forces over which I had not the slightest control ; but I am bound to confess that the two Universities under the ægis of which my childhood and youth had been spent inspired me with a sentiment that no other constituency could have stirred. Had I not been the *enfant gâté* of the University of Edinburgh, their first lady graduate ! Throughout our joint lives the professors of both Universities had been our friends, and now they were coming forward to offer this academic honour which was to crown my husband's professional career with its final success.

Meanwhile some time was passed in alternations between hope and fear, as it was possible our new-born aspirations might get entangled in a contest.

However, the feeling in favour of my husband was so strong that no one was found hardy enough to oppose him.

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

Among the many friends who came forward to help him it is curious to find that the one who did best service did it unwittingly by bringing up a long-forgotten incident.

The friend was Professor Simpson, who was elected to the Chair in succession to his uncle, Sir James, after his death. His letter to my husband lies before me, and after explaining he is "no politician," he continues :—

As things go I think there could be no fitter representative than yourself ; and, apart from other matters, the good service you rendered to the Scottish Universities in watching in their interest the progress of the Medical Registration Bill through Parliament ought to give you quite a special personal claim. I forget now what was the exact point, but I remember that you and the then Lord Elcho worked together, and at one critical moment sent for my uncle to go to London when Dr. Headlam or some of his people were threatening dangerous modifications.

Go in, then, and win ; and put my name on your Committee if you think it will be of any advantage.

With all good wishes,

I am,

Yours very faithfully,

A. R. SIMPSON.

This incident took us back to the days of 16, Somerset Street, when my husband was incessantly going down to the House of Commons to watch Lord Elcho's Medical Bill, then before Parliament. It had long been forgotten, but proved bread thrown

## PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE

on the waters, for now it came up and was considered so important that it was introduced into his address to the electors in this form :—

“ At one time I took an active part in endeavouring to secure for Medical Graduates of the Scottish Universities the liberty to practise throughout Great Britain, which some would have denied them ; and, on one critical occasion, in conjunction with the late Sir James Y. Simpson and Lord Eleho, succeeded in preventing legislation which would have obliged Scottish Graduates, before practising in England, to pass another examination, and obtain a Licence from a Medical Corporation.”

In one of the nooks and crannies of my library I have come upon an old packet containing the correspondence concerning this matter which has lain undisturbed for forty-seven years till now. It is sad to think how little such matters affected me in my young days. From this little packet I can learn that which my husband is no longer here to explain. First I gather that he and Lord Eleho were meeting every day. Then from rough drafts of letters written to Lord Monteagle, Lord Granville, Mr. Walpole, and others, I can realize the enormous trouble he must have taken to guard the interests of the Scottish Universities. When the other side seemed to be getting the upper hand he telegraphed to Sir James Simpson and Sir Robert Christison to come up without delay, and the excitement was such that it “spoilt Christison’s sleep,” and Simpson “could not eat his breakfast !” When success was the result my husband must have suggested making Lord Eleho an LL.D. of the

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

University, for Sir James in one of his letters says, "Certainly we shall make Lord Elcho an LL.D. No one ever more deserved it."

As no competitor came forward, Sir William Priestley, M.D., was in due course unanimously elected M.P. for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews.

On being introduced to the House and presented to the Speaker, the new M.P. was godfathered by the Hon. George Curzon (now Viceroy of India) and Sir John Mowbray, at that time the father of the House. On being led up between the two godfathers he was enthusiastically cheered by both sides, and most cordially welcomed by Mr. Gully, the Speaker, with whom he had been on pleasant social terms for some years. For my daughter Jenny (now Mrs. Pontifex) and myself, looking down from above, the sight was more than interesting, and henceforth the grille that had known me so little became one of my favourite haunts.

This new experience was strange in that it seemed to bring us into immediate touch with the whole world! We felt surrounded by all the nations of the earth, and the fact was soon forced upon us that every Member of Parliament was a trustee not only for the prosperity of his own country, but for the happiness or misery of other nations. It was not a matter of a single life here and there, but a matter of mowing down thousands on voting with the Government for war!

While deeply impressed with these terrible considerations at a time when the war in South Africa was pending, the doors of State would be



## THE NEW M.P.

opened to us in a thousand ways, and in we would walk with the rest to join the gay throng and enjoy the pleasant hour.

Still all was not war and havoc, for one day among the questions asked, Mr. Weir brought before the Government the "disgraceful and dilapidated state of the great library of the Edinburgh University," and desired to know if the Government would give a grant for its restoration. The reply was distinctly unfavourable. Meanwhile Mr. Weir was not inclined to let the matter drop, and a few weeks later again brought up the question. This time the Government was armed with a reply to the effect that "Sir William Priestley, the honourable member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, had undertaken to restore the library and entrance hall at his own expense."

When this piece of work was finished (and in time for a Medical Congress) we went together to attend the opening, and were greatly elated by the magnificence of the ceremony, and our cordial reception on the occasion. The *Senatus Academicus* were assembled in all the panoply of official gown and hood, and led off their M.P. in stately procession to the library. A blast from silver trumpets heralded their entrance, and when I followed in the next procession I was amused to hear my name shouted out, and again the fanfare of trumpets filling the air.

My husband's interest in the library never flagged, and his next object was to induce the officials of the British Museum to present the Committee with their great Catalogue. Before me lie letters on the subject from the Rt. Hon. Arthur Balfour (our

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

present Prime Minister) and Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, the chief librarian of the British Museum, the former enclosing some correspondence ; and the latter—with the freedom of a personal friend—saying he is glad to find he is “such a zealous M.P.” &c. Finally, a letter of thanks from Sir Willian Muir, the Principal, expressing the great delight of the Library Committee on the arrival of the Catalogue.

He was further instrumental, through our friend Dr. Wallis Budge, in getting Lady Meux to send the Committee a copy of what must be the largest book ever produced. She purchased the original and undertook the entire cost of reproducing this book—as she had so often done before for the British Museum. It consists of “The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” “The Life of Hanna,” “The Magical Prayers of Ahčeta Mîkâchl.” The Ethiopic texts are edited and translated by E. A. Wallis Budge, Litt.D. It contains a hundred coloured plates exactly similar to the original. Only 100 copies were brought out, one of which my own library is proud to possess through the generosity of the same donor.

Meanwhile St. Andrews was not forgotten, as our friend Sir Charles Nicholson, a distinguished scholar, in his desire to mark his pleasure on my husband's election, offered a gift to this ancient library through him. He was a collector of missals and old MSS., and decided to present them with “The Roll of the Law, XII. Cent. A.D.”—a gift that would always be appreciated by scholars.

Bitten by the excitement and all the work doing, and still to be done, not only in affairs of State,

## LAST DAYS

but within his own department, he got more and more into the swing as each session came round, and enjoyed more and more the work, as each of the few years still remaining to him flew by.

It was in December, 1899, when in the full enjoyment of health and country life, that the first note of warning came. Later, when we knew the malady was fatal, we brought him to town and nursed him once again in the room so severely condemned by Sir William Jenner thirty-six years before.

In the boudoir adjoining he was able to receive the many friends who came to cheer him till within a few days of his death.

The affairs in which he was concerned were many, but all had to be relinquished as day after day the curtain fell lower and lower on his dear and valued life. The London Teaching University question and its association with King's College brought various friends to his couch to discuss matters, and the last cheque he ever wrote was one for £100 to help King's College. While apparently quite happy, and certainly at peace with all men, he was quietly setting his house in order, preparing for the last change. Many of the M.P.'s came to visit him, among them our old friend Dr. Robert Farquharson, Mr. Lecky—whom he was always so pleased to see—Lord Avebury, and Lord Lister, who showed all the tenderness of a brother.

The Queen (Victoria), who heard of the illness from Princess Christian, was the first to inform Sir James Reid, who expressed deep regret, and

## THE STORY OF A LIFETIME

told her Majesty he would write to me at once. The Queen then desired him to convey a message expressing her deep sympathy with me in my sorrow, and then made arrangements for a messenger from Buckingham Palace to call daily for inquiries and telegraph the bulletins. This attention on the part of the Queen was followed with cards of inquiry from many of the Ministers of State. And all the time he knew that it meant nearing the "dark portal," and was at peace, dreading not the "silent Opener of the Gate."

The three months given him by Sir Thomas Barlow to live from the day on which he first saw him passed away, and five days were added before the end came on April 11th, 1900.

The best inheritance he left his family was the example of an unselfish life, and the remembrance of a happy home. At the height of his prosperity he was making a professional income amounting to £10,000 a year, the same as his confrère, Sir James Paget, and at the same period of time. This enabled him to be generous to his children at their start in life, and left no murmurings after his death.

For myself I live on, surrounded by the many tokens of the love and respect in which he was held, and find an endless comfort and resource in the papers and books, which have enabled me to live again in childhood, and wander through the happy years of womanhood to the completion of this Story of a Lifetime.



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